

Survey on thoughts about the Garden City idea

In September 2021 the TCPA launched an online survey, which explored people's views on the Garden City idea – what does it mean to people and what are other examples of people living in a fairer and more sustainable way.

The survey was open for eight weeks and received 42 responses. Below is a copy of the answers that we received. These have been anonymised and personal references or references to individuals removed. Please note that the views expressed in the respondents' answers are not those of the Town and Country Planning Association.

1. The Garden City idea means different things to different people. What does the Garden City idea mean to you?

The boundary between city and not-city needs to be blurred, and indeed all boundaries may be blurred, staggered, or at least reduced to implied boundaries though the use of fuzzy green interventions.
A relatively low density development with plenty of green space in some distance to the city centre, ideally including employment, though in practice most don't.
I agree that it has misconceptions. As someone living in a Garden City it means well planned spaces/town, local ownership, quality homes and spaces, natural spaces and harmony with the environment, provision of spaces that enable the community to come together and participate in arts and wellbeing. It is built on a human scale, a community that provides most of the things you need to live a happy and fulfilled life, on a scale that is manageable. It means new homes should match or improve on those ideas.
A place to live which is at peace with - zero carbon, low environmental impact and with many green spaces integrated in the design
People being able to live, work, learn and play within their local environment - including place to socialise and opportunities to maximise their wellbeing. A place where beauty meets function.
The Garden City idea is one of many attempts to collectively provide for social benefit outside the capitalist economic model. As a former town planner Garden Cities represent the epitome of 'practical idealism' whose relevance has become more resonant as our social and political model has moved further away from the possibility of making Garden Cities happen and as social and economic divisions magnify.
High-quality balanced living and working environments, long-term stewardship, using retail rents to benefit, socially improve and support communities and the best of town and country living.
It means the integration of the health-giving parts of rural areas into the heart of urban living that is well-connected and easy to access.
A sustainable, more equitable, more beautiful way of living. A model which makes it much easier for everyone to thrive and be productive.
First, congratulations on trying to spell out the relevance of Howard's ideas to life in the 21 st Century. To me the heart of the garden city idea was to create an environmentally and socially constructive urban fabric in which people could live, work, learn and play, supported by land value capture and recycling that would support long term stewardship and renewal.
The garden city means an organic and vital relationship between the people and nature within and outside the urban area. In 2021 I see the garden city as a model for adapting existing towns and cities to the natural constraints of their bioregions regenerating the local wildlife and food systems; putting bio before homo.
A collaboration between competing spatial elements and using a varied design ethos to achieve sustainable places to live.
A high quality benchmark for new towns and is something that all new towns should aspire to.
I worked in Welwyn Garden City in the 1960s and I was so impressed with the layout, design, facilities (but no pubs!), on-going trusteeship, etc, that I have been sold on the concept ever since. By then WGC was maturing nicely. The lessons from early problems at Letchworth had been learned.

I am sorry to say that the Garden City idea, to me, seems out of date, even if it isn't. The climate and Nature crises are ENORMOUS. They MUST take precedence over nice, socially progressive notions of garden cities and the like.
Healthy and sustainable living, benefiting from and supporting nature.
A very English answer to town planning to improve the lives of ordinary English people.
Clusters of municipally owned and managed beautiful towns designed for healthy, sustainable lifestyles where nature is part of everyday life and where communities and individuals flourish through civic, economic, social and cultural interaction. This means a critical mass but limited size of 35k-40k population, with a town centre and 5/6 neighbourhoods planned to provide human scale mixed housing with public and private breathing and playing spaces all set in a thriving accessible countryside.
Combining the best aspects of town living with rural access with optimal use of natural resources as a contribution to the planning of settlements in regions
At the heart of it is all about people, place and partnerships. It's about the legacy of shaping, building and realising the true potential for future generations to grow, live, work and realise their true potential - a fairer, equitable and just society. It's about resilient and sustainable neighbourhoods which can embrace changes in our day to day life and climate friendly.
Ebenezer Howard: low density; mix of town & country - been seized upon by developers as the ultimate green washing
In the oncoming era of de-growth and declining prosperity the garden city concept, designed from the bottom up, could provide a way of achieving self-sufficiency for all.
The ideal balance between town and country. Good, quality, affordable housing. Clean air. Accessible green space, employment, education, health care, retail and leisure facilities. Howard's vision is as valid today as it was in 1898, albeit with a few tweaks to account for climate change, the modern digital world and the need to promote active lifestyles and tackle the dominance of our environment by motor vehicles.
Learning adaptive climate change resilient community with rural urban synergy permanently funded
Using planning to make sustainable and socially equitable places for people to live. Lots of greenspace, minimal commuting, good connections between cities by rail or other public transport and shared ownership by residents. In theory it's great, in practise it has never been pulled off. The Tories cherry pick bits of it they like (greenery) without upholding the social ideals that were part of it's core, turning it from revolutionary urbanism into just another type of middle class suburb.
Bringing land into long term community stewardship. Breaking away from monopoly land interest. Planning new communities that target needs and aspirations over the long term.
The Garden City idea offers an alternative way of conceptualising and planning towns and cities to be more sustainable and environmentally friendly in a way that benefits not only the people of today but also future generations
In its original form, it is a practical demonstration of how the economic rent of land, which is generated by a community can be collected and shared by the whole community. This is in contrast to the private accumulation of rent that takes place in most towns and cities around the world.
Room to breath. A suburban utopia in the green field of England.
The need for a planned approach on the basis you set out in the intro to question 2 but also in having a strategic and spatial planning context and that they apply to urban regeneration as well as urban expansion
Purpose designed community of a certain size which embraces principles of inclusiveness, with open space/quality of environment and provision of services/ facilities
Decent housing near employment with high quality public realm and facilities designed or regenerated on a strategic basis
Harmony, Community, Place, Green, Sustainability, Sharing, Belonging, Calming, Environmentally beneficial, Quality, Affordability, Principled, Living, Resources, Engagement
Well laid out housing, not dense, separated by plenty of green spaces, with the opportunity to be active built in from the ground up so all required services are walkable (or cyclable) and seamlessly connected to any surrounding countryside
An integrated town plan which an emphasis on health, open space and decent well designed housing

<p>It's about thinking about the spaces as much as the buildings that make up our urban environment. Creating green links, avenues, beauty and space to breath. A garden city builds on the idea that space to walk, exercise and socialise will create a happier, healthier, more productive and safe society.</p>
<p>One of the foundations of the much more recent movement towards sustainable cities which probably dates from the 1992 Rio Earth Summit. Nice concept embracing radical ideas at the time but it now seems dated, too UK (or even England) specific and insufficiently embedded in a policy context. Not enough reference to legislation and other policy tools relevant for practical implementation. I'd like to live in one though!</p>
<p>The garden city means a combination of beauty and function - providing places people want to live, while ensuring the design of those places supports their health, wellbeing and community involvement.</p>
<p>A planned approach to delivering places for people to live & work, with the needs of people and community at the heart, meaning their range of needs are considered from the start – good quality well-designed housing, local employment, transport, recreation and social facilities, essential amenities and services, but all based on a sound financial model providing capital to build and then a sound ongoing funding stream. It is people led and financially sound but not profit driven.</p>
<p>The original ideals were ahead of their time but should be updated to reflect modern lifestyles, including: High quality, coherent design that reflects local preferences; sustainable public domain that reflects the natural and built character of the area and encourages the widest possible use for leisure, sport and exercise; accessible and affordable homes and transport; a wide range of employment opportunities; empowered local stewardship and governance that engages local people.</p>
<p>The idea of the garden city is a strategic urban planning for a human living environment. The cohabitation of the built environment with nature. A social blooming!</p>
<p>I am mainly interested in the grim realities of the "Call For Sites", the 300,000 target, Green Belts & brownfield land. Clearly a garden village would help to solve some problems especially NIMBY Objections to the expansion of existing towns. I am also interested in local history and the history of working class housing.</p>
<p>I don't really understand the "Call For Sites" process. How does one find like-minded individuals locally ?</p>

2. Designing for people and planet:

2a. To what extent is this ambition to design places to meet the human need to connect with nature, art and other people a realistic ambition for creating and renewing places today?

<p>It is very rare. There are places, but no landscapes.</p>
<p>I think the connection with nature, art and other people is still an important and realistic ambition. Most housing developments are characterised by a total lack of communal open space for instance. At the same time, I feel that the densities of so-called garden city proposals need to be increased.</p>
<p>This is incredibly important - Covid has reminded us of this. Designing a beautiful space is no more expensive than an ugly one. These ambitions are often seen in regeneration.</p>
<p>Yes, it is achievable but it needs fundamental change to the UK planning and housebuilding process</p>
<p>It remains an admirable ambition, but in the current system (not just the planning/built environment system) it is incredibly challenging. Many aspects to creating fantastic places to live, work etc. are delivered at an increased cost. The pay off is that there are potential benefits to health, the environment, wellbeing, community spirit and social cohesion etc. however those who hold the budgets to creating better places are not necessarily those who stand to benefit, and those who stand to benefit are not necessarily engaging in the built environment/"place" world. To really realise the potential of creating better places there needs to be a breakdown of barriers between organisations and government across all sectors (i.e. are housing developers spending money creating places that create health and environmental issues, which are then at the cost of the NHS and government to resolve - where there's an opportunity to work collaboratively to deliver greater outcomes through better planning and coordination.</p>

How do we understand what works and what doesn't (based on facts, evidence and costings), who is responsible for delivering the work and footing the bill, and how does this benefit all involved? Answers to those questions may help us progress.

The nuclear family household model is less prevalent than in Howard's time, so the types of housing provided would need to be different, as well as environmental goals requiring higher densities. The potential for self-reliance of small cities is also much weaker in a globalised economy dominated by large corporations. At the same time the potential for locally generated enterprises, energy production, cooperative housing etc. seems to be greater. The deep decline of local community organisation, democracy and sentiment, in response to centralising political and economic forces, makes it hard to see how such potential could be realised. Answers should be sought in other countries where these processes are less pronounced such as Germany, Netherlands and Scandinavia. The UK seems very reluctant to learn from successes elsewhere in Europe.

It's realistic as Letchworth is a shining example of what is possible in town planning terms.

It's realistic, but it would require a far less constrained planning system with far greater state intervention. Market-driven forces cannot guarantee these human needs are met.

It's absolutely possible. But it does need willing; pragmatic, flexible solutions; and really good organisers and strategists to make it happen

I live in Milton Keynes. It was developed along lines that Howard would have recognised, but with a much greater role for the state, which diminished the ability to recycle value and create meaningful local control of stewardship. During the last 18 months more and more people have come to see the enormous value of the green infrastructure including redways, leisure routes and horse trails. There has been a shift away from high density being the only 'cool' way to live. I believe the time is right to assert the value of garden city principles. However, the only way in which 'green washing' will be replaced by the real thing is through some sizeable political shifts in the approach to land assembly and value capture. It may not be as far from current ideas as it was 25 years ago, with greater state intervention now broadly accepted as necessary for our wellbeing. But it would need to involve the state, either directly through something like the new towns act, or through much more radical legislation to allow land acquisition at no scene values by properly constituted local groups.

Until the issues of personal transport and construction carbon are resolved, it is delusional to believe that new settlements of any kind can be developed within carbon budgets consistent with 1.5 degrees C of warming and the UK special responsibilities due to its (over) developed state and historic emissions. All efforts should be made to find ways of adapting and evolving existing urban areas to bring human activities in line with the natural systems.

Depends on the frame of mind - if new development then there will be an ultimate trade-off for the environment but such trade-offs can and should be an integral part of the proposals - both sides need realistic expectations of what is required and what they want to achieve.

It is completely realistic.

Very important

Yes, and no. The real world is so greedy, consuming far too many resources (not least untouchable wealthy people). Garden City ideals are okay in theory. Tragically for the younger generations, the cynical exploitation, by people of most political persuasions, of the environment makes it almost impossible to see enough co-operation happening to achieve the Green/Ecological ways of living that are, fundamentally, our only hope of restoring, over the next 40-50 years, sound ways of living. Those elements of 'Garden City' living that can contribute to a NEW PARADIGM (if you like) for sustainable human life SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED. Key organisations should come together. E.g., BBC, CBI, Trade Unions, maybe even Royalty and MOD. Traditional 'socialism and Tory individual freedom' thinking can all too easily smother the absolutely necessary changes that we must see by 2030. They have contributed to, and aided and abetted, the mess we are in.

It is a realistic ambition because it now benefits from sustainable development principles, which are antipathetic towards e.g. cities dominated by the private car.

Unrealistic because the politicians are not interested in the lives of the English people.

A realistic ambition - my home town of Welwyn GC (of 60 years) shows how this has been and continues to be achieved. Our everyday experiences of connecting with nature/art/people (and much more) in WGC have been fashioned through the care, selflessness, vision, skill and wisdom of the town's founders and designers - much without us realising it! I think these are the qualities that will be the bedrock of achieving

the ambition for those creating and renewing places today. The TCPA to its credit is doing its bit to rekindle this spirit of town planning, not least through excellent initiatives such as this very 'Tomorrow 125'.

However, implementation into actual places on a garden city scale is hindered by a dysfunctional national (English) planning system (without a national or regional spatial plan) and the interests of those who own and develop land. The garden city's joyous union of town and country was envisaged as only being achieved with sufficient scale (30k-40k pop) and this is now nigh on impossibleunless there is either state acquisition and development of the land (development corporation style) or through benevolent/philanthropic land owners.

Under the current system planning authorities and developers will continue to fight it out under the current rules of the game on piecemeal schemes which unfortunately will often mean tokenistic gestures to the garden city principles. There will be exceptions but even the best will struggle to provide what can be achieved at the sort of scale and comprehensive planning of a garden city.

I think the solution must mean formal strategic planning at a regional and national scale so that new development and infrastructure are planned in a rational way along with powers to acquire land and manage development to create truly sustainable garden cities. For renewal of existing towns, sustainable garden city principles need to be embedded in Local Plans with much stronger powers to implement them.

Without some form of regional planning to allow areas to develop garden cities to meet the needs of their regions the ambition remains mixed.

There is no shortage of ambition, perhaps what we need more of is place leadership and make it happen. Too many times discussions focus on cost vs. value - for me, value is more important than cost. Again, too many times and especially in UK context its policy led O rightly so but almost by default we see it a tick box and what we need to do is to think about what is the legacy that we are leaving for future generations and turn the events with legacy first approach.

It is a realistic need but the concept of a 'garden' anything must be dropped. It's trying to hang onto something from the past and it's anachronistic. Better to focus on modern concepts such as transit-oriented development and walkable neighbourhoods. Look at modern examples that work brilliantly, such as Vauban, Freiburg. It ticks all the boxes above AND is high density. HIGH DENSITY has to become the holy grail. I believe that the TCPA's role should be to show people that high density does not mean tower blocks - it means compact communities with lots of green space, without polluting & noisy cars everywhere.

Ref the big 'garden settlements' proposed, work needs to be done on viability because, at the moment the promises cannot be delivered - simply not financially viable. This is the most important point that is always missed.

Providing it is designed and developed using bottom-up principles it will work.

As relevant as ever as I suggested in my previous answer, even before I had looked at this question.

After Letchworth (only less than 40% Ebenezer's vision) the idea disappeared and remains a missed opportunity

It is totally achievable with political will and investment from government. However, copying bits of it won't work, as many 1950's suburbs show us today (planned around the car, lack/erosion of public services).

Capital and 'butler politicians' - whose job it is to work for capitalists and serve their interests - make the ambition increasingly difficult to achieve, especially in England (not the UK, just England)

It depends on how seriously the ideas and ambitions are taken when planning and creating spaces with this in mind. If the garden city idea is the centre of the ambition then it is achievable.

It is a realistic ambition, but to achieve it, there needs to be a wholesale re-imagining of the character and scale of places. Our landscape has been defined by events which took place hundreds of years ago: enclosure and the Clearance in Scotland de-populated rural areas. Now, these places are 'preserved' and considered to be how the landscape always was (and should be) - this is not the case. Rural Britain is the result of a particular, historic iteration of land use - larger farms to accommodate the agricultural revolution. The alternative urban places developed to accommodate those driven from the land and drive the industrial revolution. Many farmers feel isolated, often paid to conserve nature, rather than supply food. Re-populating these empty places would allow a direct experience of nature, smallholdings, horticulture, orchards, locally produced food - more people really living in a garden... the separation of urban from rural Britain must cease. I have not read Howard's book, but I wonder if this was part of his ambition - to re-imagine the country on a national scale, rather than to merely create a model Garden City?

Very realistic. By good design and making urban living spaces close to work spaces and a desirable place to live, we can concentrate resources better, minimise travel and prevent urban sprawl.

It is totally realistic
Essential to meet human need with communities that support a sustainable future delivered through the shift to zero carbon. Biodiversity/ nature recovery, access to green spaces for wellbeing are all vital and decent (i.e. real) garden cities can deliver these.
It has always been realistic in the context of humans acknowledging their place, their symbiosis with the rest of nature and never more so than now, given species extinction and climate change. But this kind of realism is not reflected in current government action (as distinct perhaps from publication, like Building Better, Building Beautiful, an aspiration as yet and completely contradicted by relaxation of Permitted Development rules).
Brought up on a Council Housing Estate in West Wales, all of the homes then had gardens front and back: front garden for Pansies and a lawn, the back garden essentially an allotment for growing fresh food, shared and exchanged with neighbours. Not a leafy idyll but a place and homes that people took pride in, which were safe for children and generated a caring community spirit, where everyone was supportive of each other, particularly in adversity. The homes were well built and affordable - a far cry from the Developer led housing, subject to the minimum of building and planning oversight and construction standards. 'Parker Morris' minimum homes standards need to be re-introduced, updated and policed - Grenfell Tower - by a well resourced and independent public sector.
It's realistic if you start with a build on a former brown space or in a completely new area of development but it's more difficult if you are regenerating an urban space - although I don't believe impossible - because the ambitions could be scaled down into pocket parks and small developments
It's a vital ambition and is achievable but not likely to happen at scale without huge political and economic changes. But we must keep pushing particularly faced with a housing and climate crisis. We must hope that some localities and local governments will have the courage to insist on this
It's still completely relevant. We know that high quality green space improves mental and physical health both directly and indirectly. By creating such places, we also help meet the needs of wildlife to permeate urban environments and for us to mitigate some of the effects of climate change. Where we connect people to wildlife in everyday situations, they become more attuned to it, and will value it more highly. The social isolation caused by home working, or fear of coronavirus will increase pressures on health and social care costs, but our open spaces can be designed to counter this, by providing social spaces - coffee in the sun, outdoor community centres, nature nurseries, men's sheds etc. that can bring us together in constructive and enjoyable ways. Public spaces are special places where people can interact with sculpture, gardens, landscape design, performance art, music in the most memorable and uplifting ways.
All very worthy but in Britain not realistic given current politics and emphasis on market solutions. The new EU Urban Agenda and EU Urban Agenda are relevant but the UK government appears to have forgotten that it ever signed up. Not much sign that the great British public is much interested in connecting with art.... Advisable to reference the UN SDGs.
It is not only realistic, but also a necessity. Despite an ageing population, so many people within our communities aren't ageing well, and aren't able to enjoy lives which prioritise health and wellbeing. The challenge however is a sector limited in its capacity and expertise in this area, and a private sector (understandably) focused on survival and profitability over their impact on the health and wellbeing of current and future generations. Change will require system leadership, and whole system thinking, to ensure that public, private and voluntary sectors can all contribute to the development of place, and that broad stakeholders (who may not even recognise how their built/natural environment affects them) have a clear role to play and practical input to give.
In addition, upskilling should include much more practical guidance on how changes to typical current new developments could be made to embrace Garden City principles/outcomes - and clarity around costs (if/where applicable) etc. so that there is a clear route toward change. Visions and principles are nice, but for most, it's not clear how to apply them.
People's connection to nature, art and other people has never been more clearly demonstrated through extensive research, research that is often cited in planning documents such as design and access statements, and through discussions through many forums and organisations, but then largely lost in the design and implementation of new developments as density and profit take precedence. This is particularly true of smaller brownfield sites with high density developments and no facilities that allow people to meet and a community to develop. Many new settlements are car driven and lack any sense of community or

cohesion as people drive in and out. Without a central meeting point e.g. a large park or community buildings, people never meet and grow communities. Nature has become more important in urban areas as countryside delivers less due to intensive farming; climate change and flood control, people's mental and physical health all require it. I believe art for the art's sake is less important – art where communities are involved is important. But all this can only be delivered if the financial model is sound and all these things are planned in right from the start – as soon as housing layouts and financial costings are developed there's little chance to influence design (for example tree planting is seen as highly desirable but too often dense housing layouts lead to a few small trees being crammed into an unsuitable space, usually 'designed' as an afterthought). Planning submissions are high on great images and words, but less on delivery in reality – they give the impression that people, nature, art is a key part of a scheme but too often it's an illusion. The result is many quite soulless developments with no heart or community.

This is a wholly reasonable aspiration, and we should see it as a given in all new developments if the Planning profession were empowered to deliver it. The Building Better Building Beautiful Commission identifies quality of place and humanistic design ideals, and these are intended to be promoted in the Planning reforms currently under consultation. Why would these not be central to developing high quality new places? The issue is the development industry's willingness to meet these ideals. Developers vary considerably in their approach to design quality, but the profit motive trumps design quality almost universally and so there needs to be a robust statutory (Planning) framework for ensuring quality and places to meet the human need to connect with nature. This is not just a realistic aspiration – it is a necessary precondition to creating communities that work for their citizens rather than for the accountants, senior executives and Boards of developers.

Urban design must be relativistic. A new approach to our living environments.
A necessity to bring down the human scale to the μm^2 scale, a new scale to be introduced in the urban analysis.

Our new theory of urban relativity, a new approach to the analysis of the biosphere, the human living environment.

This new method of analysis and study allows the connectivity of our built environments with nature.

This is all a bit high-flown and intellectual, appropriate for a university tutorial but not much use at the level most people live. We have U3A in community centres, Nature Reserves, amateur dramatics and so on. There is a big problem with C of E parish churches and non-conformist chapels which need to be reused.

2b. What practical examples, from the UK or internationally, can you recommend?

Leicester Cultural Quarter.

Poundbury in Dorset is not bad but we could go much further - especially with the carbon footprint and connectedness as a "20 minute neighbourhood".

I have some contact with the German cooperative housing movement (e.g. in Munich), which provides high quality high density relatively sustainable social and private housing in many cities. There are many examples of high quality urban developments in northern European cities, where planning and development processes are less market-dependent than in the UK - familiar to TCPA members such as Freiburg and Utrecht.

Letchworth.

New York has recently vastly increased the amount of public space given over to people rather than cars as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. This begins the work of meeting human need and creating more "rural" spaces in the urban environment.

I know the Netherlands reasonably well, and so many of their villages, towns and cities seem to have a lot of green, fantastic cycle ways where you see everyone from small children to healthy looking 80- and 90-year-olds cycling around in a relaxed manner. Cafes with outdoor seating and lots of beautiful planting and greenery, even in small towns and villages. Attention to detail. It all lends to a happy, holiday feel, even when people are just going about their day-to-day business. And the general housing (especially the new-builds), looks so much better quality than in the UK. Plenty of times I've seen new houses that have just been built and they look such good quality, well-proportioned and beautiful - and always lots of green and cycle paths linking everything together. Roermond is a good example. I think it stems from a culture where most people expect to be "middle class" whether they're plumbers, receptionists or doctors. Social equanimity equals greater democracy and

more people thriving. It's about spreading what resources are available out as equally as possible – i.e. good management of the resources available and people having a strong sense of fairness and a social conscience.

There are many European examples that demonstrate land value capture. I'm sure you're more familiar with them than I am. The U.K. has been poor and will now probably be more reluctant to follow anything European. In the U.K. the new town act was by far the best example of relevant state intervention, and reached its most relevant to our mixed economy in MK. The manner in which the public Development Corporation managed to work with private developers was an excellent example to follow, though even that was limited by the political climate of the 80s in which private sector investors were assumed to 'know best'.

The most obvious weaknesses were direct value recycling, which was controlled by treasury budgets, stewardship for the same reasons (but notable success with the Park Trust). As a consequence of these two weaknesses it was difficult to create the depth and strength of local democracy, which in any case is almost impossible in England because of the centralised powers that you refer to.

There is work starting on the role of bioregional planning (<https://bioregion.org.uk/>) and Kate Raworth (<https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/>) is claiming that a paradigm shift from GDP to well-being is a necessary precondition to planning for and developing the living environments of the future. All existing of high emissions and devastation of the natural environment are examples of what happens when GDP is taken as the guiding principle.

Barton Extension in Oxford - excellent and nuanced design within a broader community led framework

Letchworth Garden City UK, Vastra Hamnen (Malmö Sweden)

Welwyn Garden City & Hatfield new town and Bournville are good examples. Harlow and Crawley have not matured so well because the original Howard concepts were diluted.

Continental examples (e.g. Freiburg) are too concentrated on flats and apartment living to be acceptable to a British way of life.

It needs thinking through by a small group of open-minded, VERY alert people.

Among larger settlements, Singapore merits consideration: most facilities are within walking distance of the more central residential areas; efforts have been made to bring nature into the city; there is an efficient metro system. Most of the (very pleasant) residential areas created by 19th century philanthropists in the UK lack shops and services, compelling residents to travel elsewhere for them.

None, to be honest.

Much of Welwyn Garden City shows what can be achieved, but sadly even here we have seen over the last few decades ugly poor quality housing plucked from the house builders catalogue and crammed in along with sprawling housing estates on the edge of town. The contrast with many of those areas of the town planned and developed pre-1970s is striking and a lesson in itself of how to do it and how not to do it.

The old GLC expanded towns scheme as an example of co-operation between a large metropolitan city and its regional hinterland towns to develop mutually (with the exception of the bias against the lower income and unskilled benefitting)

Derwenthorpe, York Hammarby, Stockholm, Frierburg, Germany and Auroville, Pondicherry India.

As above VAUBAN and RIESELFELD. We should take lessons from Freiburg

There are none that I am aware of.

Too few. But the often quoted Dutch and German examples, our own early new towns and the pioneers such as Bournville and Port Sunlight. Plus maybe Adelaide and some of the South American examples (Curitiba?).

The way MK landscapes department is funded, Bourneville and the like

I'm not hugely well travelled so I'm not sure. Apart from famous examples like the Barbican, mini versions that seem to have been quite successful in achieving some of the ideals include the Barking Riverside development. I think Copenhagen is the closest I have experienced to a "Garden City".

Scottish Land Reform and the Scottish Land Fund - especially the Community Right to Buy. Shows what happens when politicians are not butlers for global capital (I have borrowed the butler label from Roger Burrows).

Milan's garden skyscrapers, animal crossings (globally), much of Singapore's infrastructure (airport etc)

Welwyn Garden City

The new towns are examples of urban expansion but many of the renewal projects also show these e.g. in Glasgow

UK may have some communities which edge towards the ideal, but I don't have the knowledge to recommend. Some LAs are heading in the right direction- reference to the original ideals can be useful but many development schemes do this and then propose something of a fudge.

All the British New Towns and perhaps specifically Milton Keynes (MK) as the final, largest, strategically designed and successful example, including the far-sighted creation of The Parks Trust MK to manage public, natural realm. People who live there thrive and appreciate it's design, flexibility and adaptative potential and the development model economically has been a success. By contrast, the "market" left alone has over most recent decades proven incapable of strategically meeting need on this scale or with this success and has, indeed, reduced public value in the process. It is interesting that the current government may have recognised this failure, acknowledged by their toying with the necessity of creating a development corporation to manage an expansion of MK within the OxCam Arc, indeed the whole Arc potentially.
Having visited Vienna before the lockdown, it was striking to see the initiatives taken by Vienna in the provision of well planned communities with quality housing and community resources. We can learn a great deal from their model.
Essex local delivery pilot working with planners and developers on new estates that enable residents to be active by design and developers get a badge to advertise the green and active credential of their development - which in turn may enable them to price point properties higher to cover the costs
There are glimpses of the ambition in many of the UK New Towns, in Dutch New Towns and in the French New Towns
Vauban, Freiburg, Germany - modern inventive and relevant for complete urban design. Smaller examples of good practice might be the use of old railways or urban corridors as spaces that allow travel, activity, connection and exploration... South Bank (London), Bristol-Bath Cycleway, Stour Valley Trail (Bournemouth). For a park that is starting to try to re-connect communities Winton Recreation Ground in Bournemouth is good, or Gibside in Gateshead.
Extensive EU policy & initiatives - including a range of funding programmes - which promote integrated approaches to sustainable urban development, including circular economy approaches, green infrastructure and nature-based solutions. Programme websites (e.g. Urban Innovative Actions, URBACT) have local examples of good practice. See European Green Capital & Green Leaf applicants & winners.
Countries who embrace active travel, and the way they have achieved this, should be those we take a lead from - i.e. Netherlands who have embraced cycling.
In addition, walkable communities / 20-minute neighbourhoods / 15-minute cities etc. such as Paris and those in Australia present examples of commitments and innovation that should be considered in terms of their impact on health, wellbeing, the environment, economy etc. in the years to come.
Wales offers great world-leading legislation that should guide developments in line with Howard's principles, including The Well-being of Future Generations Act (which requires public bodies in Wales to think about the long-term impact of their decisions, to work better with people, communities and each other, to prevent persistent problems such as poverty, health inequalities and climate change), The Environment Wales Act, Flood Water Management Act but this isn't yet leading to better developments or outcomes on the ground. Financial constraints and private profit driven developments are still the norm although change is slowly happening. Cardiff Council have a good program of delivering affordable Council Housing (Cardiff Living) although funding pressure still limits its capacity to deliver communities. A housing scheme in Newport – Loftus Village is a great example of what a smaller scale scheme can deliver.
Canadian example, the urban energy design, a new method of analysis of climate change caused by urbanization. An urban analysis based on the theory of urban relativity, our new method of analysis of the energy actor at the µm ² of the urban structure of the city of Montreal, a practical case available since 2021.
You could study the Deptford Housing Cooperative Ltd, Rochdale Way, Deptford, LONDON, SE8 4 LY. A study of the County Boroughs that ceased to exist in 1974 would be interesting. Exeter, Burton-on-Trent and Merthyr Tydfil lost this status. Rutland is also a useful place to study. It is currently a very small Unitary Authority. There are two surplus RAF stations - Cottesmore and Luffenham which are ready made New Towns. Also interesting is the combined Health & Social Care in Torbay. This is a small Unitary Authority with only one District General Hospital and deserves to be better known.
At one time there were the MONDRAGON cooperatives in Spain. I suspect they succeeded under Franco as left-wing politics were banned and the few interested diverted their efforts to cooperatives.

3. Democracy and power:

3a. What are the limits of municipal/community self-organisation for the creation and renewal of places?

These limits exist at the boundary of ownership.
Land assembly is probably one of the crucial factors in making new forms of development challenging.
People need to learn about and understand planning, this is a major gap, even in garden cities. Often councils pay lip service to community involvement - and don't learn from mistakes. Councillors can reinforce or challenge this. Lack of appropriate skills can be a hindrance but this can all be learned if enough time is set aside.
Not sure what is being asked here but freedom to act outside the local authority planning system is essential as it is just a blunt tool for government and does not serve local people at all.
Public interest in their place is limited. Housing stock is limited, so people choose to live where they can afford and where is available - and therefore aren't able to be too selective over where that is (particularly the most vulnerable in society) which takes pressure off those responsible for developing or managing places. In addition, the general public may not recognise how the place in which they live, work, learn etc. influences their life - be that their happiness, relationships/social connection, health, the environment. If they're not aware of the impact, or acutely aware of how they can take or support action, they won't engage.
A key limit is the uninterest of Brits in their local democracy, as long as the bins keep being emptied. Locals seem broadly happy with the centre dictating exactly what councils can do and how much they should spend. Local democracy is in a sorry state with only a few eccentrics ready to stand as councillors. Without some reconstitution of local democracy I don't see much hope at local level except in the case of small narrow-focus self-organised entities, such as local arts trusts and charities. Here there is a limit on those prepared to volunteer and they are poorly resourced.
Big question. I think Central Government needs to play an enabling role as the local politics, NIMBYs and the financial implications of City building are very big obstacles to delivery.
It's structural. Many people spend most of their time going to their jobs and then coming back home and zonking out through tiredness. Even with the change in working patterns for some, for many their economic circumstances limit energy for organisation. So some key practical policy levers are universal basic income and 4-day working week.
One massive problem is that the more people you get together to make a decision, the longer it can take to come to an agreement. In the worse-case scenario it can drag a process out so long that nothing gets done. The reason China is so quick and efficient at organising things and getting things done is that it doesn't need the approval of all that many people. The downside is a ruthless, undemocratic and inhumane way of doing things. So, I guess, for a democratic decision-making process to work efficiently, it needs some well thought-out parameters and structures in place, and some very good organisers and strategists guiding the process who have a great deal of integrity, social conscience, and wisdom. And exceptionally good mediation/people skills.
Very difficult, for several reasons. First the lack of power allowed to acquire and develop at sensible values. Second the general centralisation of powers which leaves local organisations having to bid continuously for favour from big brother. Third, because large scale Garden cities are for people who largely aren't there and aren't properly represented in the early stages. A truly bottom up approach, were it able to overcome the above problems, would be prone to value the interests of existing members more than future residents. That is where a reformed, locally led NTDC, could be a real asset, acting in the public interest but gradually handing over control to local communities as they are created.
There are no limits as a precondition of managing the necessary change. There are examples of citizen's assemblies at national and local level that could and should form the basis for negotiating the way out of the climate and ecological emergency that is affecting local areas and places where our lifestyles are being responsible for emissions and extinctions. With briefing frameworks neighbourhood assemblies (and family climate assemblies https://familyclimateemergency.net/) could be a way of creating agreement behind the local changes consistent with a world with only 300ppm of carbon in the atmosphere.
Expectations, legitimacy, funding and organisation - mutual respect and understanding of constraints, limitations, report etc.
Not sure.
Original Letchworth concept was flawed. Promoters must set up trustees for long-term stewardship based on democratic representation of the residents and their local interests. Being subsumed in a larger Local Authority

may not be appropriate. I suggest a 9-person Trust; 3 elected by residents over age 18, 3 appointed by the Local Authority and 3 appointed by the promoter and/or landowners within the Garden City boundary.

I am sorry, this whole issue of community organisation fills me with dread. What is VITAL is the rapid, serious and effective sharing and communication of really sound ecological knowledge and ideas.

The utility of ideas for achieving Earth resource and planetary health goals must be efficiently considered.

Poorly educated, unqualified local representatives will make for inefficient and poor leadership and decision-making. Less 'democracy' and greater breadth of trained professionalism is needed.

As in so many areas of life, human selfishness (along with apathy and sloth) limits what can be done. The well-publicised take-over of a Cheshire parish council by uncouth and brutish incomers shows how fragile local democratic structures can be. District/city level local authorities, for all their limitations (fading public service ethic, pusillanimity, obsession with control and micromanagement, burdensome bureaucracy etc), have an essential role to perform.

Unfortunately, we live in a top-down, increasingly totalitarian, society in which self-organisation is not a feature.

I think the limits will depend on who owns the assets of the garden city and their preparedness to enable the community to have control over their management. State ownership would mean (quite rightly) accountability in the use of public money/assets with accompanying limitations on the community's self-organisation. At the other end of the scale a benevolent landowner or group of landowners could be prepared to give much more freedom to the community in managing the Garden City. A private company established to develop and manage the town could also provide greater freedoms through its constitution within the limits of company law - as could a Trust in accordance with its charitable aims. So, quite a few options each with implications for the limits on self organisation.

The size of a community determines the success of local democratic involvement. More research is required on the optimal sizes for citizen involvement. Where expenditure involves taxes, citizens should know which organisation is funding the spending their tax money.

Not being idealistic, actually there are no limits rather we see limits to have quick fixes and more often we tend to start with a constraints approach rather than an opportunistic value led discussion.

I would be more interested in the community participation in the decision whether a 'garden city' (the phrase fills me with abject horror, having lived through [A Real] Garden Communities saga [location omitted]) is the right approach and if so how big it should be and what the right location is. Going back a stage, therefore, there needs to be greater possibility for communities to influence local plans - not to be told what is good for them... To do that, there need to be stronger Statements of Community Involvement; ideally Local Plan Referendums and a soundness test around community participation. Gunning principles should be the bedrock.

We don't know yet because we haven't experienced any kind of de-growth.

I think we need to accept that some people are not interested. Many others do not have the time or energy to be heavily involved but do care. Change is generally driven by the few except in momentous events where the masses are swept along by the momentum or extreme situations. The ability to be involved, transparency and accountability should always be there but we need to realise that not everyone will take part. We also need to understand that community self-organisation by people with jobs, homes and families can be difficult and that capacity building and support are often required. Local involvement, knowledge and priorities are, however, vital for successful schemes.

Lack of a community commonwealth fund

People need freedom of choice to live in places where their social ideals match others, at least at first. While job opportunities have become more mobile thanks to Covid, house prices are still geographically limiting. We have become unused to compromising with each other and will need time to move towards this, so I think it's important that there's an intermediate step where people can see out what kind of community (socially) that they want to live in. Government doesn't necessarily have to facilitate this in any way other than sorting out the ridiculous property-linked economy of the UK and building the places in the first place.

Clearly, you need government to be prioritising community interest. If that isn't happening then you get the sorts of reforms proposed that we saw last year. The England - Scotland contrast is striking.

One of the main issues that can be seen is that of bureaucracy within planning on a local and governmental level which is outdated and hasn't changed with the new ways of thinking. Furthermore, to achieve the aims of the garden city idea, there needs to be a consensus within society to ensure that it is a positive and sustainable idea

I don't think we have any idea! We are so used to the remote, top down, centralised control of our lives that it is hard to imagine living under any other regime. Existing methods for community engagement are so infrequent,

as to be meaningless. That doesn't mean the situation is hopeless - there are also countless examples of individuals and community organisations making a real difference, that given the opportunity, more capacity can be built and aspirations can rise...

Don't really know but current central government imposed housing targets is not the way forward.

The key limits on 'self organisation' are (i) the need for a strategic planning context and none exists in England; and (ii) the centralisation of powers and resources in the UK ; and (iii) the loss of the uplift in land values created by the public sector to private landowners

No idea, community identity and ownership of local issues is being diluted by things like LG chaotic re organisation and less democratic fixes (LEPs mayors etc). At a local level NDP don't work.

Post WW2, larger, urban local authorities (pre-eminently London) had planning and architectural departments some of which were the envy of other nations and were under democratic control. This model successfully dealt with the bombed sites and economically ravaged housing stock. For regeneration, this could be a model to re-adopt. For strategic new build at scale, the purpose-designed development corporation model is probably better - see 3b below.

Local Authorities, due to a chronic lack of funding and inability to attract professionals of calibre have abdicated responsibility to project a vision and have left housing development in the hands of developers who are interested only in profit. Housing associations likewise suffer from a lack of vision and ambition.

It's a great ambition but I am cynical about the way people connect these days - we just consulted our residents and the lack of connectedness to their community was significant. People in many places keep their heads down and don't even know their neighbours - perhaps it will be interesting to see how developments like Poundbury develop?

The highly centralised UK state and lack of funding for community led development makes the possibility of self organisation limited to very small housing projects such as by CLTs, Co-ops etc. Local government would need to 'let go' and land would have to be made available at affordable prices for community led schemes. Despite some amazing local schemes, we are all long way off this at the moment. Yet it is achievable with the right municipal and government leadership. Local government would need a complete overhaul so its community facing in a proactive sense.

This depends on good governance and equal representation. I do not think either Central or Local Government have either invested themselves or enabled others to properly develop this idea. I believe that government should own spaces, but it is not best designed to manage them. But community groups are often stifled by difficult individuals with exclusive agendas, community/volunteers will only keep volunteering where they feel they can have a positive impact. To enable this requires some form of structured governance. Allotments Societies, Sports Clubs, Area Forums etc... are very variable in terms of inclusivity.

Internationally, local authorities are seen as the key players - apparently much better organised and resourced than in UK. Too few are using their powers of general competence for place-making. Places active in city networks like Iclei & Eurocities & in EU exchange of experience projects have built capacity through collaboration with peers. Now constrained by Brexit. Lack of local leadership and political commitment. Worn out officers. Feeble parish councils unwilling to look outwards & mainly fighting new development. Some hope in community interest companies but they mostly focus just on one or two issues (e.g. community energy) & don't claim a wider role.

Creation and renewal of places requires an element of understanding and expertise to really appreciate what is possible, how it can be delivered, and how/where to push for change. In addition, it's not common knowledge across communities that their physical environment can so significantly affect their lives - and for many communities and individuals this is never going to be a realistic priority.

I believe delivery of large schemes through community self organisation is very difficult today; the process is complex and expensive. To be successful a large landowner or benefactor, or a not-for-profit organisation, or far-sighted government program would be needed. However once built, community involvement is essential to a development's success, to give a feeling of ownership and pride, be that through community café, involvement in management of open spaces or increase biodiversity, to identify what is missing and could be created. Too often developments consist of individual dwellings, and the running of the parks, library etc are outside the control of people living there.

Where I can see it working better is on smaller scale expansion of villages, where schemes imposed upon residents by outside bodies such as Councils and the Government create massive resentment and opposition (even if needed to provide housing for local people) whereas if community-led this could be a much more

positive process, with people feeling a sense of ownership and seeing how it can bring benefits to the community.

I believe we should aim for a progressive development of the governance of new communities, where the development stage could be undertaken by e.g., local development corporations, with established community representatives sharing power with the landowners, developers and invited experts, but with phased transition to community-based control as the development matures and moves into the stewardship phase. Limits in the creation stage are the ability to secure land ownership and the access to capital for development – although this has been addressed in examples in e.g., Germany or Holland.

A cross-analysis between different actors at the µm² will be able to define the limits to self-organization for a real organization, according to the specific characteristics of the environment in which we live. A new method of organization that is beyond our old methods of urban analysis.

Very low. I don't think people are interested in that sort of thing. The commercial banks could be an obstacle. There is the Triodos Bank in Bristol but not much has come of it. The Cooperative Bank never was a cooperative and is now separate from "The Cooperative Group". There is still the Public Works Loan Board of course, but you need to be a council to borrow from them.

In recent years there has been acute "Austerity" and local councils have been starved of cash. They cannot put the Council Tax up by very much. It did look as if this might ease but then covid came along.

The Tory Party has an ideological obsession with low taxation but they don't tell you what they want to cut. In the USA there is a chap called JEFFREY SACHS who has written several books. One of these attacks this low taxation argument.

3b. To what extent do you think central government should play an enabling role in the creation and renewal of places?

They should. They won't. Indeed, they cannot.

Compared internationally, local government is rather passive in its use of land policy instruments. In continental Europe, many local authorities pursue land policies involving land banking, which is aided by instruments such as pre-emption rights.

This is so important, the government area to centrally control everything! They can enable in terms of providing support/expertise, but it is local communities who know what is needed best.

As little as possible except in providing funding and providing supportive legislation.

It's critical.

Government must create a framework and policy environment which actively promotes creation and renewal of better places - while allowing local control to ensure these meet the needs of local communities. Local authorities, communities and community organisations need confidence that they are able to challenge poor standards of places and expect more.

Central government should strategically withdraw from dictating public service delivery and return resources and responsibilities to the local level, perhaps with competitions to reward localities where locals are most energised to get involved, to get the ball rolling. 40+ years of urban regeneration policies has delivered some good material gains but done little to reverse decline or to raise political engagement levels.

The assembly and delivery of sites and infrastructure to prevent politics (and the votes that result from blocking development) preventing delivery.

It has an absolutely pivotal role, if only because the UK is such a centralised state still and decentralisation is the first step to releasing more investment outside of the central bureaucracy and London/the south-east. But on the national policy level, the concern is that successive governments may reverse good policy and not reverse bad policy.

They need to facilitate the financing of projects but hand over the organisation and realisation of projects to people and organisations who actually have expertise, practical knowledge and great organisational skills, rather than politicians with ideologies, fairly, short-term vested interests and often not a lot of pragmatism or useful experience.

I think it's inevitable. In larger developments there will inevitably be a need for enhancement of national, regional or sub regional infrastructure, which could never be funded from local land values. Also, as said above, the capture of those values can only, under current legislation, be achieved through use of the new towns act. If we had a government willing to pass radical legislation to allow acquisition, be local groups

then the second problem might be overcome, but the first needs central government involvement and coordinated funding over a lengthy period. This is very difficult to achieve and is one additional reason for using NTDCs, which have a status that helps them to get round the table with various government departments and argue their case.

Government should set and enforce firm targets for carbon emissions. If these are consistent with a fair contribution from the UK to 300ppm of carbon globally this is likely to amount to a moratorium on new building (see that operating in the Solent due to nitrite pollution). The transport decarbonisation plan should also accelerate the removal of fossil fuelled vehicles from the road. How zero carbon transport evolves need not involve central government. How local needs for housing, jobs and leisure are met can be determined locally.

They should continue to support 'good design' and provide good examples. Continue to support a framework of experts in design and what is expected to meet policy developments.

Central Government should play a major role.

100%. To do the job properly will need compulsory purchase powers and new policies regarding compensation. Freeholds and Leasehold laws may need a re-think. There will be things which are contrary to party-political dogma (whichever party is in power nationally and locally). Infrastructure provision needs better management. All this implies some sort of non-Party political consensus.

National organisations devoted to those goals are vital to make for more efficient and green-effective outcomes. Politicians must allow informed scientists and skilled professionals, including lateral-thinking ones of all ages to be more influential.

An enabling role implies creating the conditions for local actors to succeed. This is about more than the nuts and bolts of legislation and a favourable policy framework. It must entail tackling NIMBYs and dealing with the aspirations of landowners determined to maximise the worth of their property.

Given our present crop of politicians...none.

To achieve development of sufficient scale I think it inevitable that central government will need to play a role in land assembly and will necessarily have an enabling role in how the GC is developed and managed, likely through a development corporation. In this respect I think government should have that enabling role. Even more fundamentally, government should have an enabling role in terms of co-ordination with infrastructure provision and the creation/renewal of other GCs through strategic national and regional spatial strategies.

Central government can play an enabling role by encouraging regional partnerships between the large metropolitan cities and their hinterland towns to develop optimally. But not by more layers of government like elected regional assemblies.

My experience says it's a must, without it we cannot change the market (as it is) to bring about a fundamental change - again the public leadership point. As public sector, we need to collaborate but more importantly focus on the place as a client.

Government should a) invest heavily in any large development it backs and b) invest first and foremost in social housing - far more important than 'garden cities'. A) is because the work [campaigners] did around the North Essex Garden Communities showed that developers cannot deliver all the infrastructure, green space and services required through s106 etc. West Tey alone, at 24,000 homes, would have required a £1.6bn financial injection from government. Essential that this point is hammered home. 2,000 homes is the optimal size and after that viability begins to reduce.

Enabling legislation for bottom-up development. Noting more than that.

They should provide the legislation and funding to enable it while allowing local leadership and financing where practical or where there is a will.

Provide grants for communities to compulsory purchase and develop rural land over 1000 acres

To the full extent. Better places will never be built while housing is a profitable commodity.

They need to provide the legislative template, serving communities and not Russian donors.

Ultimately central government's role should be vital and necessary in order to have the biggest positive impact.

Clearly, only central government has the resources to provide significant infrastructure for the built environment. Roads, cycleways, railways and provision for utilities and other national services are in their remit. Otherwise, more power should be devolved to local communities, together with the fiscal means to raise sufficient revenue to deliver for communities to develop and renew themselves. Our high streets are in

desperate need of re-purposing; however, the process is being left to an ad hoc matter for individual landowners to choose how it might happen. We may end up with a hotch potch canvas of inappropriate uses sprawled across the current urban fabric. A better approach would be to enable local authorities to purchase at fair existing use value buildings whose current use is redundant, and to concentrate the commercial centres of towns. Larger towns would similarly retain smaller pockets of shops and services in different areas. In the meantime, the buildings 'in-between' could be returned to residential use, or redevelopment could take place appropriately, rather than allowing the current random 'permitted development' changes of use. This need is urgent.

Enabler but not target setter.

It has a key role in removing the three barriers referred to the answer to question 3a

They could but no evidence at present of the delivery along the right lines- funds directed to ad hoc bodies, no clear rationale behind multiple grants except maybe political expediency. Some areas are very worthy causes with unaffordable housing, poor transport and lack of investment but too small to attract support. Re invigorated Homes England that did look at design and quality would be (is?) welcome

Central government has to create the framework within which an economic model is created around land valuation to enable the development master plan to be enacted financially. Central government has also to create a stand-alone development corporation with relevant and adequate powers. We know how to do this, these models exist and were developed for our New Towns movement post WW2 up to 1967 (MK).

The role of Central Government is to set standards for home building and community renewal that are enforceable and not subject by developer lobbying. Developers should be forced to release land banks - CPO - which distort the housing market and local authorities should be allowed to raise funding to deliver the quality communities that are needed.

They should probably fund some level of those developments and regenerations, but whether they know enough about local places to guide decisions is debatable. Often a local MP has almost no connection to local council elected members or council officers - or at worst a complete disdain for them.

It must play a key role in planning, funding, land policy to enable others to act

NPPF / Grant Funding / Advice and Research / National Policy and Guidance

Essential to have well-informed and inspiring national URBAN policy + enabling legislation, resources etc to demand & support effective local action to meet shared goals. (See eg OECD Global Report 2021, UN Habitat etc). OECD confirms that UK no longer has urban policy. City mayors are not enough. Re planning policy - Devolved Admins are much better than England at setting a framework .

Government needs to lead through policy, and connection of major bodies/stakeholders, to ensure quality development of places. Appropriate powers need to be available to demand the creation and renewal of places which address known issues related to health and wellbeing and provide people with the best possible chance of leading a healthy lifestyle within their neighbourhoods/communities.

Central government needs to be enabling, creating conditions through good legislation that requires/drives positive change, seed funding, and providing land, that allow others to create sustainable settlements on a more regional level. New towns have generally been unsuccessful in creating valued places to live, being too soulless, not achieving the vision that Howard wanted for Garden Cities. Often governments are too easily influenced by private profit driven businesses who push their own agenda e.g., through political donations, leading to the opposite, with weakening of Planning controls. Also, governments change priorities, personnel, parties frequently, and are short term, removing the continuity needed.

Government is primarily there to create a framework for the development of new communities, primarily through the Planning system, although alternative approaches to the taxation of development which meets certain design or environmental quality criteria could assist.

The renewal of the place is up to science, the state must align itself with science by a regulation to save our environment. The creation of the places must be also to science to assure a prosperous future to our planet and a return to the normal.

England is notorious for central control from Whitehall. Much effort is currently wasted in "BIDS" for funding. If central government says "JUMP" they will all jump! There are some garden villages financed by government - there is one in South Derbyshire. There is something happening at Sherford, which is just outside the Plymouth Unitary Authority but in Devon. There is talk at Cullompton and action in Cranbrook.

3c. What relevant and practical examples of these approaches (community self organisation to create places and/or government enabled but locally-led development processes), from the UK or internationally, can you recommend?

An interesting approach of self-organisation can be found in Oosterwold and Buiksloterham in the Netherlands.
None
Energy Community Trusts are a good example of locally-led, locally supportive organisations but this does only tackle one element of the problem.
These are hard to find outside arts centre running and charitable enterprises (e.g. hospices and community workshops funded through charity shops). There are good local initiatives to plug the gaps left by shrinking council services, some good community pub projects and, in my area, an interesting coop enterprise for work parties to repair and maintain the local public footpaths system (Calderdale).
Having tried to assemble a site to deliver a 12,000 home stand-alone new settlement on the Mid-Norfolk Railway Line in Central Norfolk I know how difficult this process is and how local politicians will try to prevent growth.
Difficult to think of one right now, sorry!
I know more of community self-organisation such as Canon Frome Court, a farming cooperative and community in Herefordshire, or Wir vom Gut eG (pronounced 'veer vom goot), Mydlinghoven 4, a substantial community based on what was once a grand, old estate in the countryside in tram-hopping distance to the centre of Düsseldorf, Germany - they also rent out some apartments to holiday-makers to supplement their income. Retired people live there, families, single people, couples, doctors, teachers, lawyers, nursery teachers, translators etc. For anyone who wants to live in their own apartment or house but is willing to pitch in to keep everything well-maintained and running. They have a community cafe /shop and events, have a little nursery on site and borrow each other's cars if they need them - and share school runs in the car so that one parent takes a bunch of children to school one day and another picks them up after. The kids run around in and out of each other's houses and they have some sheep to keep the grass well mown. They have co-working spaces for people who work from home, arts and crafts spaces, a library, and massive communal/social areas for parties, music events etc.
Oxford citizens assembly.
Barton - Oxford.
None at present! Solution needs to be thought through without political bias and will probably need a truly mixed economy with some facilities (re)nationalised, some municipalised and some commercially independent.
The Welsh Government's LANDMAP landscape information system is an excellent example of a really useful decision-informing tool: Landscape Assessment aNd Decision MAKing Process]. Supported by successive editions of Planning Policy Wales, LANDMAP has about 12,000 unique landscape areas spanning geological, habitat, visual(&) sensory, historical, and cultural landscapes. All but cultural are graded for the importance of the qualities that led to their selection by strictly co-ordinated landscape specialists. The areas quality assured. It is a far more robust and useful system than the English 'character areas' method that was (ill-advisedly) promoted to other UK countries, to the Council of Europe for the European Landscape Convention, and to Ireland, which floundered wastefully in attempting to use it in the early 2000s. I led the development, and proving of LANDMAP, based on exceptional prior experience, including of England's character methodology. I was ably supported by many professionals in Wales, where the consensus was to develop a method that was fundamentally utilitarian, comprehensive, robust, and freely available to the public.
None springs to mind.
I struggle to think of one. Some Icelandic communities were established in this direction.
Sadly I can't recommend any.
None at present.
The current cohort of 49 Garden Towns and Villages has a rich tapestry of what is the art of possible and what could happen. New Urbanism examples from around the world but also (not the usual suspects) the slums and shanty towns (we need a better phrase for it)

No, no, and no again to locally-led new town development corporations. There is not the expertise to run them and they become remote, autocratic and un-accountable. In north Essex, the pre-cursor to a LLNTDC was run by a small cabal of councillors from four councils, behind closed doors. It produced nothing but some shoddy analysis which the planning inspector slated. It spent £8m and then had to be wound down.
There are none in the UK.
Housing cooperatives.
Incredible Edible
LILAC (a coop housing estate) in Leeds seems quite good. Although they have had problems mediating arguments, they seem to have made a good go of building a community based on ideals. Quite a lot of their funding was from government, I think? I think the government should be looking at places like that and asking themselves how they can be scaled up.
Again, the Scottish example. That's rural and small scale, but principles can always be scaled up. England has a lot of CLTs that are now forming development partnerships with registered providers. There must be lessons there, but of course CLTs hit the barrier of a private land market. They have relied on site exceptions, which are not scalable. And they now face the threat of 'First Home Exceptions'. To me, these are a clear signal that this government always, always wants private interests in the driving seat and deriving the lion's share of benefit. This is just the way things are done and the way to realise its economic vision - based on squeezing as much rent from land, irrespective of what that means for communities.
I have read about the Preston Model, which I am sure you are familiar with. In South Africa, I have come across small scale local initiatives to enable people to not only feed themselves, but produce enough in addition to sell to their neighbours and generate an income. Some information is here: https://umsizi.co.za
Leybourne Chase near Maidstone is an interesting idea but not yet fully formed. Created from a former mental hospital it contains a potentially good blend of open space, housing and amenities. Very dependent on having a strongly led CIC to run the community side though and still a work in progress.
There are many examples. My direct experience is that we had these approaches in the UK as follows. The role of strategic planning (e.g. Glasgow and the Clyde Valley); the role of powers and resources (e.g. Strathclyde Regional Council) and the uplift in land values (e.g. the new towns generally)
Again Vienna has set out a model for community building which should be studied and adopted.
I'm not personally able to recommend any but I believe there is a community in Wales which fits this description
See literature from the CLT Network and Co-Housing Network. The Preston model is inspiring in many ways; if that could be rolled out more widely and scaled up then we might be on to something
Not sure
See for example ICLEI websites and the European Sustainable Cities & Towns Campaign. Dutch cities like Breda are worth a look. The annual EU Week of Cities & Regions (this year's is next week) showcases many examples.
Although having limited knowledge of it, the National Park City approach in London, which seeks to deliver better green infrastructure and many other positive community aspects, has come from a bottom-up approach, and I think increasingly the public when acting together have the power to change things.
Several projects are deployed around the world supported by associations, research centers and governments.
Sherford - South Hams District Council Cranford - East Devon District Council

4. A shared economy:

4a. To what extent do you agree that a municipal local economic model can work in new and renewed places?

There is hope in this, although still implies explicit boundaries. In particular, this model may reclaim unused spaces, from which a proportion could be required to invest in green infrastructure. Confiscate ransom strips and green them.

<p>It can and does work - we see this in Letchworth and in smaller scale e.g. community pubs. A lack of the municipal economic model has really negatively affected WGC and something I'd like to see a return of, perhaps on a small scale.</p>
<p>A key issue is "who owns the land?" many schemes are not possible unless the land comes "free" (as in Poundbury).</p>
<p>This smacks of socialism/ Marxism! That would be OK by me, and this is the original GC model and one that has worked and could, technically, work again. But the political response to this would be very negative, assuming continued present UK government philosophy. If delivered, long term viability would be threatened by the privatising instinct of the present lot or some later Conservative administration, given the absolute power of the UK parliament to undo anything good (council housing, publicly owned water supplies).</p>
<p>It can work if the land is assembled at a low enough value. It can't work using a traditional development model or when agents become involved. The last needs to be acquired at a low multiple of agricultural values i.e., it cannot be anywhere that development could reasonably be expected to be accommodated in the short to medium terms.</p>
<p>Of course it can!</p>
<p>It's absolutely possible. The Wir vom Gut eG example near Düsseldorf is a substantial community not a city, but with good planning and organisation, it's absolutely achievable. Of course, processes will need to be tweaked to suit different circumstances but making some mistakes along the way is a normal part of really getting it right in the end.</p>
<p>Ownership of commercial assets can be a solid source of income for supporting community assets. However, it is not straightforward. Legal obligations of trustees can require them to take a narrow, commercial, view of the way they deal with those assets, including some that may be occupied by charities and locally grown companies that need flexibility in lease terms. All of this can be counterproductive if it isn't thought through from the beginning. Letchworth has experience that seems positive but may also suggest lessons to be learnt. The MK Parks Trust has, I believe, experienced some of the issues I refer to.</p>
<p>So long as Government has outlawed practices that lead to climate catastrophe and mass extinction there is no reason why a municipal local model cannot guide the regeneration of local areas.</p>
<p>Local people know more about local issues so by engaging locally they can think globally. But these must be realistic.</p>
<p>100%</p>
<p>Of course it will work if we all forget our prejudices, set aside our vested interests and pull together.</p>
<p>Only if ecologically very well informed people are given acknowledged lead roles will this work. Otherwise, we risk posturing, and comfortable words, as good work misses out and is side-lined in municipal aggrandisement. That must be avoided this 'last opportunity' time around.</p>
<p>There are numerous examples of cities and towns that are pleasant places to live as a result of generations of investment reflecting affluence in the settlement and surrounding areas, though the natural consequence of this is that property prices are high and exclude less wealthy people with similar needs for a healthy and attractive environment. By the same token, we see poorer areas abandoned by large companies following industrial decline. Stoke-on-Trent is a less extreme example than Detroit, though we have failed to provide adequate support to cities such as Stoke.</p>
<p>This will not happen in a capitalist society such as ours in which the pursuit of profit trumps all.</p>
<p>It should be able to work, as shown in Letchworth and the early decades of WGC. As with so many of these questions, it will depend on how the land is acquired in the first place and the motives of the owners in its long term development and management.</p>
<p>Not sure that 100% municipalisation would work given the flaws in human nature of elected representatives. Core municipal ownership of the essential services maybe. Alongside private investment and mutual/co-operative societies.</p>
<p>Absolutely will work - because if we build a shared ownership of vision for the future, everyone will come forward to help and support. It's both the right thing and will help the communities to be an integral part of all round benefits.</p>
<p>I think this is a red-herring in the planning world and that getting the basics right is far more important. We need an accurate and up-to-date housing target. We need affordable housing, with investment from government in social housing. We need to ensure wide and deep community participation. And we need to</p>

protect the environment. CPRE et al's six planning tests are the ones to focus on. Garden cities are a dangerous distraction which solve no problems and create many.
Not at all. The vested interests of municipality will make bottom-up planning and development impossible.
It can work, although renewing existing places with existing patterns of private ownership and vested interests is much harder.
The EH model is more relevant today than when it was conceived
I think this can work but it would probably work better if there was some national oversight. Physical geography and the social inequalities that have built up to this point would no doubt mean that schemes like this would initially exacerbate inequality across the UK, with some people living in well provisioned places that are self sustaining or even profit making and others where that isn't the case. Some sort of redistribution of wealth would have to occur or many places would just collapse.
The politics has shifted, and the economy has transformed, making the above more difficult. Financialised land, property and infrastructure means that extraction is government's priority in a way it wasn't (as much) 100 years ago. The context is more hostile.
Wholeheartedly agree
I detect in Howard's vision, and creation of the Garden Cities the principles set out in Henry George's Progress and Poverty, whereby the economic rent of land would be the natural source for public revenue. This resource grows as the community grows, it is self-sustaining, and should be possible to adequately provide for all the public goods and community needs. It may be impractical to revert to more public ownership of land, but it is practical to collect more of this economic rent by fiscal means. I feel that a new iteration of how this has worked in Letchworth, warts and all, could inspire a new generation to change their view of unconditional private ownership. It might allow a new level of understanding that this community bounty must be shared more equitably...
Vital as gives a sense of ownership and place.
Agree totally
Might be good to try but everything is a long way from these ideals- start with communities feeling responsible for and able to influence their environment and manage some aspects of it using resources it generates or provides. Local renewable energy might be a good model.
In renewed places local is probably best because of the established community sensitivities involved.
I completely agree with the statement and its aims
Utopia !!!
No reason at all why the land value capture model of the early New Towns could not be applied widely but Government appears to have no interest in this. It wants land value profits to go to developers and landowners to give them an incentive to build new towns. Thus, contemporary 'new towns' and 'garden towns' are not in fact New Towns in the sense of capturing land value for the community
Completely, but it needs to be outside of Local Gov. Should be charitable.
Of course it can work, as it does elsewhere in Europe, but EU and national governments have to provide a supportive framework for action which minimises barriers to bottom-up initiatives. See for example many years of experience in Scandinavian countries where municipalities own the land in their admin area. Lots of action in Germany & Netherlands. Much recent work on circular economy e.g., Amsterdam City Doughnut.
This sounds like a positive aspiration, but outside of my expertise to be able to comment. The challenge here it would seem is that the expertise and capacity to develop communities lies within private developers, who have a responsibility to generate profit for their own stakeholders. Such community led development would presumably require a significant increase in Government or associated bodies to provide expertise, funding etc. to establish the necessary capacity.
The principle is sound, with the local employment and income generation feeding into the local economy but for this to be feasible the development would need to be built as separate from existing ones, which today is unusual. Where a new development is an extension or re-modelling of part of an existing one, this is a more difficult option on a large scale. Having one or two primary landowners would also be essential. But on a smaller scale, use of local currency, such as in Crickhowell, can provide similar benefits. Increasingly with Local Authorities unable for financial and resource reasons to adopt and maintain elements of developments, such as public open space, an alternative management model is used, where residents are expected to pay for maintenance. This creates a two-tier system as people living outside can use these for free. Funding of long-term infrastructure, e.g., play areas, is expensive and could result in high costs for residents, so having a

way of local business generating income to contribute funds would be very beneficial. This would work better through a Land Trust model rather than private management company one.
Urban functions determine the quality of our living environment. Economic models determine the urban components and give a functional identity to the place.
When Howard was writing, municipal enterprise was in fashion, especially in the old County Boroughs. These were really city states and ran everything. You don't hear the words "MUNICIPAL" and "CORPORATION" very often these days - it has gone out of fashion. It could be done but not many people would understand it. You might like to study the formation of the London Passenger Transport Board in 1933 by HERBERT MORRISON. This was the prototype for the "STATE CAPITALIST" approach adopted by the Labour Government in the 1940's. Remember the old Clause 4 of the 1919 Labour Party Constitution !

4b. To what extent do you agree that the development model for creating and renewing places should enable a fairer sharing of the profits of the development process

Entirely.
Land speculation is a major problem and the high risks of land assembly for property developers translate into high profit expectations for each development, which seem to be significantly higher than in comparable developments on the continent.
Absolutely. Developers generally do not care about communities and treat communities as idiots. Places mean people.
Of course. Not just fair "sharing" but as much of the "profits" should be retained by the local community as possible. See earlier comment about land costs.
Fairer sharing of value uplift gains is critical to any such model, should one such be achieved. Otherwise occupiers will take the money and run on the present model.
It has to be that way or it won't work.
Absolutely!
The only way you get a really thriving, productive, economically viable society is to share the resources as fairly as possible. Otherwise you're cutting off the oxygen supply to some and allowing others far more than they can ever really need. It's all about creating a happy, healthy, sustainable balance.
Absolutely.
The profits from the development process are derived from people paying more for their properties than it took to build them. That creates housing that is unnecessarily expensive. In a world of 'retrofit first' of both housing and settlements land value capture becomes less relevant. The price of housing will oscillate around existing property values and those created by energy efficient sub-divisions in different locations and done to different standards. Deep energy refitting will have to be financed from and may depress property values.
Totally agree - but this must be done in an equity model that outlines what that sharing means.
100%
Whole heartedly! The profit motive might help some situations, but the present unsatisfactory arrangements are mostly driven by greed.
A fairer sharing of the profits of the development process is fine in theory, though CIL and other charges can undoubtedly make people think twice about seeking permission for development. If it is agreed that development is required, such charges should not become a deterrent.
I totally agree.
I agree 100%! I think this is fundamental to the garden city ideal and without it we would be creating something that isn't a garden city.
Not sure that the development model would encourage entrepreneurial activity that generates the wealth. Equitable taxation models for sharing profits perhaps.
Could not agree more.
De-growth is incompatible with profit sharing.
I agree completely. Local people deserve a share of the benefits. Local understanding of the benefits will help gain support.

I agree with this totally but as mentioned before, I think some places would even profit and this could exacerbate national patterns of inequality
Who wouldn't agree with that?
I believe this would be a crucial factor in allowing places to thrive in the way they need to in order for garden cities to work
I agree wholeheartedly. However, the current development model delivers poorly in this respect. It has perhaps been hijacked by developers; at the root of the problem lies the ability for developers to either acquire land or the option to buy land in advance of the planning process and capture a high share of the uplift in value arising on the grant of permission. Conversely, where a local authority might want to buy land for development, the compulsory purchase legislation has failed to secure land at existing use value.
If we were in a truly egalitarian society this would be great, but without buy in or creation of mixed models of funding through Green Bonds which could appeal to at least semi-philanthropic investors, we will still rely on the profit driven private sector.
Fully
Infrastructure of all kinds is essential and best delivered with assistance of some form of development value levy. Quality places do need more than the current methods deliver.
It is absolutely essential. From the end of WW2 we now in Britain have the benefit of experiencing two distinct models at work. First, the early C20 Garden City movement elaborating into the New Towns culminating with Milton Keynes, producing strategically large-scale development, economically sound from a public point of view. Second, the "leave it to/with the market", where house building (non-Parker Morris) is the single focus with lip-service paid to public goods or realm or communal benefit and facility. My conclusion is unequivocal: (1) large-scale development has to be public regulated and controlled through central government directly enabling via dedicated development corporations; (2) regeneration should be local authority (LA) enabled and led where the LA has been properly equipped, staffed and funded for the purpose.
Completely agree
Absolutely agree - what do we currently have? CIL and Section 106 and often a development that doesn't make funds available until the final properties are sold which is way too late.
Agree entirely
I'm not sure exactly what you mean by this. I'm not sure profits should be shared, bt they should be reinvested in into community.
Agree - central government needs to enable local authorities more scope on planning gain. S106 & CIL don't do the job. Look to other countries for alternative approaches.
Agree - most current developments are built by developers on a profit driven basis, looking to maximise return, with the developer leaving the development once complete to move onto the next, with no long-term stake or interest. Issues such as community development and maintenance/management of the infrastructure are either not seen as part of their remit, or are handed over to another profit driven company. Having one organisation with a long term-term interest both in construction and ongoing creation of a community and its infrastructure is a much better model. Some sites, such as the Ely Mill development in Cardiff are trying this but the original ideas which were excellent have become watered down, primarily for economic reasons, over time. Others such as a major 7000 dwelling development on the outskirts of Cardiff by Redrow (Plas Dwr) is seeking to maintain involvement through the land owner Plymouth Estates and a Community Management Company, but it's yet to be seen how well this works, and whether any of the profits from the selling of houses goes into the development itself or simply to the various housing developers involved.
This is central to the garden city model – without that we are left with profit-driven large developments which will fail to recognise local need and focus on maximum profit extraction. I have nothing further to add that wasn't said by EH in 1902 !
An equitable sharing of the benefits of the development process is a utopia that will allow social balance and prosperity for humanity.
The "Chattering Classes in the Westminster Village" have been chattering about reform of the Land Compensation Act 1961 for some time. This would allow local councils to acquire farmland at agricultural value and sell it on to developers. I suggest TEN TIMES the ag. value. There is no doubt that the price of building land has got out of control.

4b. What practical examples, from the UK or internationally, can you recommend?

Scottish Land Commission, 2020, Housing Land Allocation, Assembly and Delivery: Lessons from Europe.
The German cooperative/ communal housing model looks like one that should be explored. That works on a development by development basis (supported by municipalities), rather than a town-wide basis, but it would be a start and might be extendable.
We at Lanpro/Glavenhill have the land and the model but we have struggled with the local MP and politicians at the District and County Councils blocking growth to get re-elected. We would be willing to come and explain our proposals as a credible working model.
From personal experience: Roermond town and surrounding villages in the Netherlands seems vibrant, green and well-balanced; and Wir vom Gut eG, Mydlinghoven, Germany.
New towns, but with reservations as above.
See - http://www.sustainablecitiesindex.com/
Letchworth.
Howard's way (from the past). But this will require the greediest people to give up the most!
None spring to mind.
Contemporary Russian examples are interesting.
Unfortunately, I can't. The nearest in my knowledge would be Letchworth.
None
Apart from the historic examples from Garden cities movement, MK there are limited examples. We have done a lot of talking but we need to do it now.
I doubt if there are any in the UK. I don't know elsewhere.
Letchworth and Welwyn Garden City!
Letchworth and any other place with a community commonwealth fund
Singapore is always held up as an example but I don't know if it's translatable to the UK
See above
The Land Acquisition Act of 1966 in Singapore allowed the government to acquire land for any public purpose. The design of the legislation meant that owners could not challenge the principle of purchase, and a Tribunal was established to determine the level of compensation, which would take no account of the potential uplift in value from future or expected public investment. Once again, the design of legislation is crucial to ensure a fair apportionment of returns. Tom Aubrey has proposed a reform of the Compulsory Purchase Act to improve the UK legislation. See here https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201719/cmselect/cmcloc/766/76607.htm
I can't.
Milton Keynes on both counts , see 4b (1) and (2) above. (1) the original MK Master Plan and development mechanism (2) the so far unfortunate and now temporarily stalled regeneration programme in MK with the lessons that are being learned and new plans being developed
Vienna
None sorry
There are glimpses of this in Letchworth and in some projects in Milton Keynes. The Netherlands which has a different development model where land is bought and prepared by local authorities before developers get their hands on it
Look at UK Parks Trusts - Milton Keynes, Royal Parks, Nene Park, The Parks Foundation, Bristol & Batharks Foundation, Urban Green Newcastle, plus theatre/cinema trusts.
Utopian!
I am told that these things are done differently in other European countries.

5. If the Garden City idea is no longer relevant to the C21st century, what is our next big idea?

I think the garden city, in particular its development model, social ambition and connections with nature and the arts are still very important. But it mustn't be used as an excuse to just deliver suburban housing with private gardens and poor accessibility except for the car.

The Garden City is still relevant but, like all good ideas, it needs some revamping for the times we live in, especially as regards zero emissions.
We might take a completely different tack such as pursue a standard basic income which, in theory, could enable everyone to afford decent housing, but that is even more Utopian than the Garden City.
It is relevant and giving up on it would be absurd but the UK needs another Ebenezer Howard. It requires an individual with social leanings, without politics, with a clear vision, huge amounts of time to work and deliver the model, no fear of personal loss and sacrifice that can raise big finance. These people are thin on the ground which is why the model was never continued. All those people are current focusing on space travel and personal gain at the expense of the environment.
Car Free Cities! wearepossible.org/carfreesities
Bringing far more nature and a more humane environment into the city in terms of beautiful, decent housing, green spaces, community facilities and projects is the only way forward. We need food and water to survive and a beautiful environment (both physically and in terms of community and belonging) to thrive. It would save vast amounts of money in terms of poor physical and mental health and slash crime. Why would you anaesthetise yourself with drugs, too much food or alcohol if you had a life really worth living and didn't have to slog and struggle endlessly even for the very basics? If you had a really decent lifestyle where nobody had way too much or way too little and plenty of equal opportunities why would you rob someone or become part of a violent drug gang? You wouldn't need to.
It is relevant, but it may need to be approached from a different angle. Emphasising the physical allows developers and their well-paid planning consultants to get away with greenwash. The core is land value capture and recycling. This must be addressed head on, and why shouldn't it gain public and political support, given it essentially means less taxpayers money is needed to produce decent places. The second essential is control of the development via land ownership, by a publicly accountable non profit body.
The retrofitted city within their bioregions (local food and wilding back better) with custom-splitting being the main force in meeting housing needs. These could well embrace a variety of co-living and co-housing models.
The environmental/digital city - ultimately the Garden City is an example of an integrated development model but the implementation and application rests on a false economic model, which makes the implementation limited - hence why we have urban extensions rather than new towns. It has to do with our expectations of how compact our cities are going to be, and realistic expectations of input from consumer groups - see https://chinadialogue.net/en/cities/7934-why-eco-cities-fail/ as an example.
Building a small town based largely on the self build model is another option to be seriously considered.
I believe that the Garden City concept could still be relevant but major changes are needed. Not in ideas but in the implementation. Long term planning is essential, policy changes at every 5-year parliamentary term must not happen.
A Garden City implies yet more development. The growth of the human population in recent decades has worsened the natural world, resource supplies, the carbon emissions crisis, and human stress-detachments from nature. The big idea has to be prioritising Nature. It must be spelt out as the Foundation for Human Life. Policies, programs, strategies, programmes, and initiatives need to grow from nature assessments: integrated across different geographical scales from world to local.
A task force to target urban areas in most need of assistance and take steps to reverse their decline and provide the infrastructure and other conditions required for a healthy and pleasant life. I would put Stoke and the Black Country high on the list of priorities.
The Garden City idea will always be relevant. I forlornly hope that one day it will come to fruition and flourish.
It is relevant! As mentioned in my answers, land ownership and sufficient scale are fundamental to achieving garden cities and I think the big challenge in the first instance is to assemble sites - and in a co-ordinated way. My Big Idea is to look at the many stately homes in England with their vast estates as a potential source. Might also have a chat with the National Trust.
Garden Cities adapted to the scientific and economic ideas of the C21st would still be relevant. I have no big ideas.
I believe it is still relevant.
Glad you asked this question. As I stated above - forget big ideas. Stick to the knitting: We need an accurate and up-to-date housing target. We need affordable housing, with investment from government in

social housing. We need to ensure wide and deep community participation. And we need to protect the environment. Transit-oriented development and compact, walkable neighbourhoods. If you need a big idea, then DENSITY could be the winner. Make it popular, educate planners to educate the public, protect valuable green space.

Cluster development may be more feasible.

It is relevant.

The idea is relevant, but the term has been hijacked and as a result devalued. In the current nature-based solution paradigm (to the climate change emergency and biodiversity crisis) the correct term is forest garden city using a rights based approach to the definition of forest and capitalising on the carbon sequestration, environmental, agronomic and economic advantages of woodiness.

I think it is relevant but I'm pessimistic that it would ever happen in the way Howard intended it to and I don't think cherry picking bits of it will work; it requires a lot of input from government, and I don't have the faith they would ever do it right. Unfortunately, I think the best "big idea" is not to have a big idea but to improve little bits of the system we are already in over time. We could probably achieve a lot by ensuring people have a basic income and making them feel their voice is heard by local government. Stronger resident associations, linked to MP's, would help this but fundamentally we need to ensure people have enough money to live on before we can assume they will care about where they live.

Garden City is a label. It's what's underneath it that matters - and whatever the label, prioritising public interest over private interest is always going to be the goal. This is about land, how we use it, and who benefits.

It remains relevant for the development of New Towns, but they must be given teeth. A better, bigger idea would be a comprehensive, universal, meaningful collection of the economic rent of land on a national scale, in line with a reduction of our existing regressive taxes on consumption and production such as VAT, PAYE and NI. Not so much levelling up, but levelling.

Environment Investment bonds. A blend of government subsidy, philanthropic private investment and risk reduction, saving on (say) flood risk insurance premiums through natural flood management projects.

Start with defining the problem you are trying to solve - it will lead to the big idea

It is but a network of places and smaller but sustainable communities will also have a part to play.

Let's not waste time and money re-inventing what our own relatively recent history provides, as exemplified above.

It is still completely relevant as it is about people and the quality of life.

It's still a great aspiration but there are cultural differences within and between communities which need to be borne in mind - or there's a danger this would only gain traction in more well off communities.

The Garden City idea is still relevant. There is much to learn and admire.

My hope is that the climate emergency creates an opportunity to rethink planning for places. But to make progress Government has to address the land ownership and land value problem and redirect housing building subsidies to social and affordable housing (including funding a massive programme of council housing and community led housing)

I think you take the problems we face... climate, ecology, health, fuel, housing, education, care etc.. and think about how you could design a city / town that could best respond to these things, making people happy and solving those problems. What would a perfect day be for a child, adult, employer etc.... how can we get as close to this as possible by designing in a much more multifunctional way .

Creative implementation of the UN SDGs. Has anyone done a systematic assessment of the Garden City idea against the SDGs, especially SDG 11?

I believe the Garden City concept it is still as relevant today but integrating biodiversity, climate change and health have to be emphasized and planned in as part of new and housing renewal, and funding mechanisms for delivering development have to change. The focus has to be not just on delivering larger new developments, but the principles embedded into smaller scale local developments, particularly urban redevelopments on brownfield sites which are particularly poor for people and their wellbeing.

The Garden City idea is still highly relevant to the 21st century, in an adapted and contextualised form.

The relativistic urban analysis, according to the urban relativity theory. The µm² analysis of our living environments!

The idea is still relevant

December 2021



Town and Country Planning Association
17 Carlton House Terrace
London SW1Y 5AS

+44 (0)20 7930 8903

tcpa@tcpa.org.uk
www.tcpa.org.uk

Town and Country Planning Association

The TCPA's mission is to challenge, inspire and support people to create healthy, sustainable and resilient places that are fair for everyone. Drawing on its roots in the Garden City movement, social justice is its driving ambition. Its vision is for homes, places and communities in which everyone can thrive. Informed by the practical articulation of a philosophy of place encapsulated in the Garden City Principles, the TCPA's strategic priorities are to:

- Work to secure a good home for everyone in inclusive, resilient and prosperous communities, which support people to live healthier lives.
- Empower people to have real influence over decisions about their environments and to secure social justice within and between communities.
- Support new and transform existing places to be adaptable to current and future challenges including the climate crisis.