



Garden Villages and Towns: Planning for Children and Young People

March, 2018

Summary of Recommendations

Professor Peter Kraftl (PI)
Dr. Sophie Hadfield-Hill (Co-I)
Alex Laxton

School of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences,
University of Birmingham



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

E · S · R · C
ECONOMIC
& SOCIAL
RESEARCH
COUNCIL



RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations have emerged from previous research by the University of Birmingham team and their colleagues, alongside outputs from discussions at the *Garden Villages and Towns: Planning for Children and Young People* event, held at the University of Birmingham in February 2018.

This section is structured around higher-level **challenges** and **recommendations**, which are intended for a wide range of stakeholders involved in the design and implementation of large-scale masterplanned urban communities (henceforth 'new-build developments').

The challenges and recommendations are focused on four thematic areas:

- i) Governance and policy.
- ii) Engaging children and young people during the planning process.
- iii) Engaging young people during and after the build.
- iv) Planning for children and young people: design and placemaking.

If you would either like more detailed information, or support in implementing any of the below, please contact the project team (using the details shown at the end of this report).

<p>GOVERNANCE AND POLICY</p>	<p>Challenge 1:</p> <p>Embedding children and young people's views, needs and experiences at all stages and at all scales of the planning of new-build developments</p>	<p>Recommendation 1:</p> <p>National and local stakeholders could develop ways to embed children and young people's views, needs and experiences so that new-build developments are inclusive and vibrant places for <i>all</i>. Opportunities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploring opportunities for national-level policy guidance – informed by a robust research base – that articulates mechanisms for 'designing-in' children and young people. • The development of a national-level 'toolkit' to support the delivery of Garden Villages and Towns in which children and young people's needs are embedded and clearly signposted. • Explicitly designing-in children and young
-------------------------------------	--	--

		<p>people's needs into Local Authority-level planning processes/documents, (including masterplanning, community engagement strategies, Supplementary Planning Documents, design and access statements, contracts between Local Authorities and Developers).</p> <p>Developing a series of 'childhood and youth principles' that could cascade through each stage of the planning process. For instance, Local Authorities could bring together the multiple stakeholders at a site to develop an integrated 'children and young people's engagement strategy' (see Recommendation 5).</p>
<p>ENGAGING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DURING THE PLANNING PROCESS</p>	<p>Challenge 2:</p> <p>Children and young people are rarely involved in consultations for new-build developments. However, there is established evidence that they can make valuable and important contributions, especially if children and young people of different ages and backgrounds are involved</p>	<p>Recommendation 2:</p> <p>Stakeholders should actively engage with diverse groups of children and young people wherever possible during the planning process.</p> <p>Stakeholders should explore opportunities to influence a 'culture change' amongst colleagues and delivery partners by clearly communicating the importance and value of engaging children and young people in planning new-build developments.</p>
	<p>Challenge 3:</p> <p>There are often few or no residents on-site during the planning and consultation process – it can therefore be hard to identify children and young people to consult with</p>	<p>Recommendation 3:</p> <p>Stakeholders should engage with as great a range of organisations/individuals who work with children and young people to gain access to diverse groups.</p> <p>These organisations may be based <i>locally</i> but not necessarily <i>within</i> the proposed new-build site, including: schools, healthcare providers, larger employers, voluntary groups, youth organisations, community and religious organisations.</p>

	<p>Challenge 4:</p> <p>Ensuring that the planning process formally recognises children and young people as key stakeholders</p>	<p>Recommendation 4:</p> <p>Stakeholders should find ways to explicitly write children and young people's participation into masterplanning, community engagement strategies, Supplementary Planning Documents, and into contracts between Local Authorities and Developers. Furthermore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consider setting up a series of 'children and youth engagement principles' that could cascade through each stage of the planning process. • introduces scope for flexibility so that constructive suggestions can be meaningfully integrated and that participation does not become tokenistic. • develop feedback mechanisms for children and young people who participate so that they can understand where and how their engagement has influenced the development.
	<p>Challenge 5:</p> <p>Finding concrete mechanisms to meaningfully engage children and young people with the planning of new-build developments</p>	<p>Recommendation 5:</p> <p>There are many constructive ways to foster children and young people's participation in planning and design. However, and bearing in mind the principles set out in Recommendation 6, key approaches could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design Days' in schools where planning professionals explain in-progress masterplanning documents and canvas ideas (e.g. through mapping, modelling, creative play, future-scoping). Work with teachers to ensure that these sessions are linked to the National Curriculum to support children's learning and multiply the benefits of consultation. • Community-Based Workshops with young and old residents and relevant policy/practitioner organisations (e.g. community mapping, guided walks, augmented reality apps). • Visits to developments by schools or other youth organisations (see above) to input into a Design Day or Workshop.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using technologies for Design Days/Workshops or as standalone engagement tools (e.g. drone footage, walk-through videos, serious games (e.g. <i>Minecraft</i>), bespoke app mapping tools [e.g. <i>Map My Community</i>, developed by the University of Birmingham team]) • Setting up or using pre-existing formal youth consultation processes, such as youth councils, young ambassadors, National Citizen Service. • Engaging 'harder-to-reach' young people (and especially teenagers) through 'outreach'-style activities – like pop-up shops in shopping centres, street art, detached youth work.
ENGAGING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE DURING AND AFTER THE BUILD	<p>Challenge 6:</p> <p>Recognising that masterplanning is not the end of the process for engaging children and young people</p>	<p>Recommendation 6:</p> <p>Explore ways to include and support children and young people's participation in the ongoing 'placemaking' of a community during and after the build.</p> <p>Stakeholders should explore opportunities to influence a 'culture change' amongst colleagues and delivery partners by clearly communicating the importance and value of engaging children and young people during and after the build.</p>
	<p>Challenge 7:</p> <p>Finding formal structures and resources to support the ongoing involvement of children and young people post-build</p>	<p>Recommendation 7:</p> <p>Develop policies, structures and resources that can foster the ongoing place-making process. Key approaches could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a Post-Build Fund (e.g. as part of Section 106 agreements) that is dedicated to ongoing community engagement, with explicit reference to children and young people. • Requiring developers to continue to consult with diverse residents as they move in as part of explicit contractual obligations, with clauses related to children and young people. • Using key community facilities (e.g. school or community centre) as points of

		<p>articulation for place-making, recognising the resources and investment in the local area that these facilities offer. Explore the approaches in <i>Recommendation 5</i> to facilitate ongoing engagement.</p>
	<p>Challenge 8:</p> <p>Negative rumours, myths and tensions can start early on in the life of a new-build development, deeply affecting residents' lived experiences. Often these myths can be created by children and young people, or be a specific source of tension between children and adults (e.g. over 'ownership' of public spaces)</p>	<p>Recommendation 8:</p> <p>Foster ongoing, inclusive, intergenerational initiatives that can support the development of positive 'stories' about the new community.</p> <p>Such initiatives could include community workshops that lead to public art projects celebrating the longer social and natural histories of the site and involving schools or other groups in competitions to name streets or other features.</p>
	<p>Challenge 9:</p> <p>Recognising and addressing the fact that there will likely be teething problems with new communities – whether in terms of faulty technologies, delays delivering services, or misunderstandings around the community's infrastructures</p>	<p>Recommendation 9:</p> <p>The capacity for public engagement could be developed through the implementation of a communication and engagement strategy by planners, developers, policy-makers or agencies. This strategy could encompass provision of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accessible updates about development progress, delays/problems and timescales. • opportunities for local communities and potential/present residents to engage with ongoing planning decisions during and after the build, including Local Plans, Joint Core Strategies, and Neighbourhood Plans. • mechanisms for community feedback about outcomes of engagement activities.

PLANNING FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE: DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING	<p>Challenge 10:</p> <p>Understanding what it means to ‘include’ children and young people in the design of new-build developments, in ways that do not adversely affect other residents. This extends <i>beyond engagement</i> to the actual design and build of new spaces. How can Garden Villages and Towns be ‘child-friendly’?</p>	<p>Recommendation 10:</p> <p>In accordance with principles of inclusive design, to plan and design good places for children and young people is to plan and design good places for all.</p> <p>A key principle should be to concentrate on ‘designing in’ children and young people – and positive intergenerational spaces – rather than ‘designing out’.</p> <p>Stakeholders may in particular be influenced by the principles of the Child Friendly Cities movement (see <i>further reading</i>).</p>
	<p>Challenge 11:</p> <p>To identify specific features of design and place-making where children and young people’s views, needs and experiences can be taken into account</p>	<p>Recommendation 11:</p> <p>Stakeholders should recognise that children and young people are some of the key users of outdoor public spaces in their communities. Drawing on research with children and young people, there are many specific design features that should be taken into account, including the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared surfaces: to combat misuse of these spaces (especially by car drivers), develop education and engagement activities (alongside signage where appropriate) to encourage the proper use of shared surfaces. • Connectivity: to overcome tensions between old and new communities and enable children to use facilities in both communities, design-in permeability and ‘flow’ through a range of pedestrian, cycling and road routes. • Transport routes: to ensure children’s safe mobilities within and beyond the new-build development (which can range from simply walking for pleasure, to commuting to school/work, to interfacing with public transport), ensure pedestrian/cycle routes are effectively planned to enable flow around the development.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological features and technologies: to counter misunderstandings and under-use of features such as Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems, introduce community-based education programmes, signage, opportunities to integrate green infrastructures into school curricula, and explicit recognition that these features can have multiple uses (from informal play to Forest School). • Services: drawing on planning best practice, where possible, there should be a commitment to building services (e.g. schools, community centres, cafes) at the very early stages of the build; opportunities to use these services to develop community relations, place-making and senses of belonging should be maximised. • Designing-in flexibility: stakeholders could explore at least two opportunities to design-in flexibility: through deliberately leaving parcels of land 'unfinished' for communities to develop either temporary or more permanent urban interventions (which might include children doing so through play); through a post-occupancy fund that can support ongoing efforts to engage the community in developing the site. • Intergenerational spaces: recognising that not just young children play, there should be emphasis on designing multi-use public spaces and streets – and even 'play' facilities – that can be enjoyed by residents of <i>all</i> ages, with potential benefits ranging from community cohesion to improved health and well-being. • Ownership and legibility: where appropriate, it should be made clear to the community (e.g. through signage and a lack of physical boundaries) that green and other public spaces are accessible for all.
--	--	---



- Christensen, P., Hadfield-Hill, S., Horton, J. and Kraftl, P. (2017) *New Urbanism, New Citizens: Children living in Sustainable Urban Environments*, Routledge
- Hadfield-Hill, S. (2012) Living in a sustainable community: New spaces, new behaviours? *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability* (Special Issue: Children, Young People and Sustainability), 18, 3, 354-371.
- Horton, J., Hadfield-Hill, S. and Kraftl, P. (2015) Children living with 'sustainable' urban architectures, *Environment and Planning A*, 47, 4, 903-921.
- Horton, J., Christensen, P., Kraftl, P. and Hadfield-Hill, S. (2014) 'Walking ... just walking': everyday pedestrian practices of children and young people, *Social and Cultural Geography*, 15, 1, 94-115.
- Kraftl, P., Horton, J., Christensen, P., and Hadfield-Hill, S. (2013) Living on a Building Site: Young People's Experiences of 'Sustainable Communities' in the UK, *Geoforum*, 50, 191-199
- Horton, J., Hadfield-Hill, S., Christensen, P. and Kraftl, P. (2013) Children, young people and sustainability: introduction to special issue, *Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*. 18, 3, 249-254.

- Child Friendly Cities website (<http://childfriendlycities.org/>)
- Healthy New Towns website (<https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/innovation/healthy-new-towns/>)
- New Urbanisms in India website (<http://www.new-urbanism-india.com/>)
- New Urbanisms, New Citizens website (<https://newcitizens.wordpress.com/>)
- Rethinking Childhood website (<https://rethinkingchildhood.com/>)



If you would like more detailed information, or support in implementing any of the recommendations made in this report, please contact us:

Professor Peter Kraftl
University of Birmingham
P.Kraftl@bham.ac.uk

Dr. Sophie Hadfield-Hill
University of Birmingham
s.a.hadfield-hill@bham.ac.uk

This report was based in part on in-depth collaborative research involving several institutions. The details of the projects are as follows:

ESRC '*New Urbanisms, New Citizens: Children and Young People's Everyday Life and Participation in Sustainable Communities*' (RES-062-23-1549)PI: Professor Pia Christensen; Co-I: Professor Peter Kraftl; Co-I: Dr. John Horton; Dr. Sophie Hadfield-Hill

ESRC '*New Urbanism in India: Urban Living, Sustainability and Everyday Life*' (ES/K00932X/2)PI: Dr. Sophie Hadfield-Hill; Dr. Cristiana Zara