



BUILDING RECOVERY: CLOSING THE GAP

Solutions for a fair recovery

ABOUT FUTURE OF LONDON

Future of London helps build better cities through knowledge, networks and leadership – across disciplines, organisations and sectors. We are the capital's independent network for regeneration, housing, infrastructure and economic development practitioners, with 5000+ professionals using FoL as a hub for sector intelligence, connection and professional development, and a mandate to prepare the next wave of cross-sector city leaders.



PROJECT TEAM

Hannah Gibbs, Eunice Leong, Nicola Mathers, Sophie Nellis and Tara Nelson.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Arup is the creative force at the heart of many of the world's most prominent projects in the built environment and across industry. Working in more than 140 countries, the firm's designers, engineers, architects, planners, consultants and technical specialists work with our clients on innovative projects of the highest quality and impact.



Countryside is a partnership developer working with local authorities and housing associations to regenerate housing estates, brownfield land and town centres. We create homes and urban spaces that people want to be a part of and we ensure that social value for the surrounding communities is embedded throughout all of our development programmes.



Lewis Silkin's recognised experts provide legal services in all major service areas. Their clients range from small businesses to FTSE 100 companies, all who value their personal touch, their effective communication and their individual style.



Montagu Evans exists to create inspiring places to live, work, communicate and connect. We care about legacy, partnerships and people. Advising clients with complex planning and development challenges.



Mount Anvil has spent 30 years focused on London. We create outstanding places that are known for world-class design, lasting quality and genuine customer care. We raise the bar each time, evidenced by the customers and partners that keep coming back to us.



Pollard Thomas Edwards is an architecture practice specialising in the design of homes, neighbourhoods, public and mixed-use buildings throughout the United Kingdom.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Lauren Ambrose, Mount Anvil; **Sogol Ayazi**, Arup; **Marcus Bate**, Mount Anvil; **Nick Bec**, Arup; **Lizzie Bird**, LB Hackney; **Samuel Blake**, Montagu Evans; **Mark Booth**, LB Camden; **Dinah Bornat**, ZCD Architects; **Zerritha Brown**, LB Brent; **Catherine Brownell**, LB Southwark; **Annette Butler**, The Albany; **Megan Cannons**, L&Q; **David Christie**, Transport for London; **Katherine Christie**, Montagu Evans; **Ayanda Collins**, LB Islington; **Patrick Devlin**, Pollard Thomas Edwards; **Matthew Dickman**, Montagu Evans; **Natalie Dinsmore**, More Life Home; **Lauretta Doku**, LB Southwark; **Robert Evans**, Argent; **Rokhsana Fiaz**, LB Newham; **Bradley Goding**, Mount Anvil; **Sara Hanrahan**, Lewis Silkin LLP; **Leon Herbert**, Roots Barbers; **Su Yuen Ho**, EcoWorld London; **Serena Horgan**, Catalyst; **Kieron Hyams**, Arup; **Janki Johri**, Arup; **Stefanos Koryzis**, London Communications Agency; **Laetitia Lucy**, Arup; **Robert MacDiarmid**, Countryside; **Caroline Macfarland**, Common Vision; **Natalia Martinez**, Habitat3; **Jo McCafferty**, Levitt Bernstein; **Richard McLernon**, Belfast City Council; **Tim Metcalfe**, Pollard Thomas Edwards; **Sarah Mogford**, Lewis Silkin LLP; **Stephen Morris**, Pollard Thomas Edwards; **Caroline Murray**, Poplar HARCA; **Rory Olcayto**, Pollard Thomas Edwards; **Louise Page-Jennings**, Yoo Capital; **Tricia Patel**, Pollard Thomas Edwards; **Adriana Moreno Pelayo**, Arup; **Katie Pennick**, Transport for All; **Stephen Platts**, LB Southwark; **Clare Reddy**, Lewis Silkin LLP; **Nina Royle**, The Forward Trust; **Diane Shrouder Johnson**, Brent community representative; **Paul Smith**, LHC; **Andrew Taylor**, Countryside Properties; **Jess Tierney**, University of the Arts London; **Anthony Van Hoffen**, Lewis Silkin LLP; **Davinia Venton**, Countryside Properties; **Malcolm Ward**, Poplar HARCA; **Mike Woolliscroft**, Countryside Properties; **Diana Yordanova**, Housing Europe; **Blossom Young**, Poplar HARCA; **Stephanie Zeulovet**, Inbo Architects; **Dima Zogheib**, Arup.

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
INTRODUCTION	4
SOLUTIONS	7
Conference reflections	8
Places	12
Peckham Library Square	12
Friary Park	14
Belfast Urban Childhoods	16
Co-Location in the Heart of Deptford	17
Coventry City Centre South	18
Aberfeldy, Poplar	20
Approaches	22
Changing approaches to communities and environment	22
Maximising the planning system for fairness	23
RECOMMENDATIONS	26
Affordable Housing	27
Public space	28
Culture	28
Transport	29
Skills	30
Decision making	31
Diversity	32
Community engagement	33
Maximising the opportunity of recovery	34
CONCLUSIONS	35
USEFUL RESOURCES	36
GLOSSARY	37
END NOTES	38

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Future of London's **Building recovery programme** emerged because of concerns within our network of built environment professionals about how city makers respond to recovery from Covid. The pandemic has highlighted the huge inequalities facing London and other cities, and has demonstrated that urgent action is required to address them.

In summer 2021, we published the Building recovery insights report,¹ which uncovered the shared challenges across specialisms within the built environment. This report provided a clear sense of direction, focusing on the key themes of **housing, public space, culture, transport and skills** to bring out the urgent issues we need to collaborate on to secure a fair recovery.

Building recovery – Solutions for a fair recovery responds directly to the challenges raised by the Insights report and through research findings, case studies and recommendations, provides inspiration and practical ideas for people looking to address inequalities through their work in regeneration, housing, infrastructure and economic development.

Findings

Findings from the Building Recovery Conference demonstrate that many within the built environment sector are already using the pandemic as an opportunity to reappraise and change existing approaches. From local authority strategies to social value measurement tools and community-led projects, city makers are taking action to make sure we 'build back better'.

Although the challenge is daunting, there is a sense of positivity within the sector. Senior leaders are taking ownership and giving their teams permission to take different approaches so that placemaking and other urban projects can be more inclusive.

The recommendations at the end of this report cover the five key themes above, as well as the overarching topics of community engagement, diversity and decision making. There is currently a window of political will and public support for change which we must capitalise on. The built environment sector needs to:

- **Lean on the open door** – speak to senior leaders who are currently open to changing thinking and approaches to make them more inclusive. Use this opportunity to affect the way we work in the long term.
- **Maintain momentum** – keep in mind the pace of change we were able to adopt during the pandemic and promote this speed amongst our colleagues to address urban inequalities.
- **Focus on communities first** – radically change our engagement processes so that we take the time to work with communities as equals and come up with plans or projects that are built on this, rather than on guesswork about what's best for them.
- **Celebrate successes** – addressing inequalities will not happen overnight, and in order to maintain stamina and positivity we need to find ways to mark achievements and highlight when we've taken a step forward.
- **Be accountable** – as demonstrated by our case studies, there are practical actions we can all take to have an impact on equality. Make your own commitment to having an impact on fairness.

The built environment sector has the opportunity to address inequalities through our work. We must see ourselves as positive change makers, ready to work with communities to do things differently to create a fair and inclusive recovery.







INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has brought inequalities into sharp focus and highlighted the urgency of the issues we face. Ethnic minority groups in the UK are almost twice as likely to live in poverty compared to white people.² Nearly half of everyone in poverty is either a disabled person or lives with a disabled person.³ While we have all felt the social and economic impacts of the pandemic, we have not felt them equally.

Unless we tackle this head on, we risk living in increasingly polarised cities, with inequalities pervading all aspects of urban life. As outlined by Friends of the Earth in their recovery plans, “fairness is not, however, only a moral imperative, it is also a necessity for addressing shared global problems. We are all in this together and we need to act like it.”⁴

When we consulted with our network of more than 5,000 built environment professionals at the end of 2020, recovery was understandably at the top of everyone’s agenda. Recovery will be one of the biggest challenges we face in coming years. Critical to this will be addressing the devastating impact of Covid on inequalities.

There is a strong sense of ambition within the built environment sector to ‘build back better’. The pandemic, together with other issues in 2020 and 2021, have made the desire for a fairer London even stronger.⁵

But the sector needs guidance on how to prioritise fairness effectively and within resource constraints.

The Building recovery: closing the gap programme has sought to answer

1. What do we mean by fairer cities and how do we measure it?
2. What is stopping us from achieving this?
3. Who is doing this well and what can we learn?

Questions one and two were answered in Future of London’s 2021 Building recovery insights report,⁶ which revealed the urgent challenges facing those working in the built environment.

These are summarised here:



HOUSING

- Addressing affordability
- Finding viable solutions to tenure mix
- Meeting needs of changing lifestyles and specific communities



PUBLIC SPACE

- Addressing unequal access to good quality public space
- Fostering community stewardship and ownership
- Improving safety and accessibility of our open spaces



CULTURE

- Digitisation and unequal access
- Fostering grassroots organisations in a time of strained budgets
- Using culture effectively as a catalyst for economic growth and community cohesion



TRANSPORT

- Avoiding a car-led recovery
- Responding to changing travel patterns fairly
- Making a shift to accessible, greener transport



SKILLS

- Addressing shortages within construction, data and digital literacy
- Gearing up for green industries
- Finding effective ways to target those with limited employment options

While these specialisms face specific challenges, there are some overarching themes uniting them, leading to some clear priorities for the built environment sector. We must:

1. Address the lack of diversity of people working in, and contributing to, our sector.
2. Focus on social value and change the way we make decisions to prioritise this over short-term financial gain.
3. Find ways to work with the communities we're planning and building for as equals.
4. Increase the skills of those under-represented in the sector and ensure these skills match future employment opportunities.



ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report seeks to answer the final question on page 3: ‘who is doing this well and what can we learn?’

Insight is taken from research, interviews, input from our Future London Leaders candidates,⁷ field trips and our Building Recovery Conference held in November 2021. The conference sought to respond to the challenges raised by the sector in the first phase of the programme, and provide inspiration and practical recommendations to make sure that we all play our role in reducing inequalities through recovery.

The programme has highlighted the commitment of the built environment sector to take action and change the ways we work to promote fairness – and has uncovered best practice examples from those who are prioritising inclusivity in their work.

This report will provide inspiration and guidance to help improve our skills, knowledge and approaches, with the end goal of increasing our impact on inequalities. Following the case studies, we have made a series of recommendations, drawing on all our research.

As the programme has been based on in-depth interaction with people working on the fairness agenda and real-life projects, these recommendations are rooted in the practical and provide a clear sense of direction for those looking to play a role in addressing inequalities.



SOLUTIONS

The solutions highlighted here are intended to respond directly to the challenges outlined in the programme. Clearly, we need to find new ways to develop and deliver projects so that we can be more inclusive. The following section is made up of reflections from our conference, as well as case studies featuring either a policy, project or approach that promotes fairness and helps us to see how we can do things differently. None of these are a panacea, but all offer insight that can be transferred to other contexts to increase impact on reducing inequalities.

Our case studies are split into places and approaches.





© Debbie Castro

CONFERENCE REFLECTIONS

Here are some of the key findings from the major event in this programme – our Building Recovery Conference.

Overarching principles for recovery

Keynote speaker Caroline Macfarland, Director and Founder of Common Vision, highlighted that while the pandemic exacerbated inequalities, it has also given us a new lens through which to see how our cities and societies work – and we have to focus on what we've learnt. For an equitable recovery we need to consider how we unlock the agency of individuals and communities to build resilient places and give communities the fuel they need to empower them.

Regardless of our specialism, Caroline encouraged us to consider recovery according to the following key principles:

- 1) **Resilience** – everyone can experience vulnerability and strength. Look at what we have learnt through the pandemic to make us robust and adaptable.
- 2) **Infrastructure** – with a growing interest in social infrastructure, there is a need for greater imagination as we plan collaboratively for what we want our future to look like.
- 3) **Power** – community power is hard to measure, but think of it as the fuel for social capital and infrastructure – what gives people the confidence and sense of trust to be involved?

“We need to have an industry that reflects society.”

Robert McDiarmid,
Countryside



© Debbie Castro

Reflections on our key themes



Transport

We need to better recognise the role mobility has to play in the lives of specific groups of people. For example, immediate changes to streets to encourage more walking and cycling post-pandemic brought about benefits for many but left people with disabilities excluded, inconvenienced and, in some cases, in danger. Changes to bus timetables will have a bigger impact on deprived communities, people from ethnic minorities and women in comparison to white middle class people.

We must prioritise policymaking and funding to include diversity and inclusion as a key part of sustainability. This can start with better collection of data to focus on individuals' needs.



Skills

The journey to net zero will require us all to keep up energy and enthusiasm while enabling and empowering people to sustain change. But we need the skills to get there.

Our panellists agreed that we can use the need for skills in green and growth industries to appeal to a more diverse potential workforce and address inequality in employment. But defining green skills in any sector is an issue – we need clarity of definition to be able to expand opportunities and learning to encourage a green recovery.



Public space

The Greater London Authority describes London's public space as “the city's living room” – where civic life plays out.⁸ However, disadvantaged communities are less likely to have access to private gardens, balconies, or quality green space.

It is vital that everyone – regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, age or socio-economic status – has local open space where they feel welcome, particularly as London's density grows.

18% of London is dedicated to green space but there is a way to go to create a public realm that is welcoming to everyone. In London, on-street parking takes up the equivalent of 10 Hyde Parks.⁹ In Paris, 50% of the city's street parking has been reclaimed for bike lanes and street greening.



Culture

We heard from the No Bass Like Home project – part of the programme within LB Brent's year as London Borough of Culture. Within this project, the council worked with the local community to 'reclaim and reframe' the history of reggae music in the area.

Using this approach, the stakeholders involved ensured that the diverse culture of LB Brent was a key part of the programme. The LB Brent example shows how culture can be used as a tool within recovery to engage with members of the community who are often excluded. It can also help young people to see the potential career options within the creative industries. By prioritising culture in recovery we can find fun and engaging ways to give local volunteers a voice and confidence.

“We need to support communities to do [projects]– it must be community-led, local authority-supported.”

Zerritha Brown, LB Brent



© Zerritha Brown



Housing spotlight: Examples from our international panel

The New European Bauhaus initiative,¹⁰ championed by Housing Europe and supported by the European Commission looks to apply the core idea of the original Bauhaus¹¹ to housing – connecting the European Green Deal to our living spaces.

The initiative thinks about housing beyond buildings and brings benefits to the whole of society by increasing connection to nature, securing affordability and fostering a sense of belonging in residents. The scheme is funding projects across Europe with new forms of social and community housing that are accessible, and support innovation in sustainability and inclusion.



© Stephanie Zeulovet

Space-S is a large social housing development in Eindhoven, the Netherlands, with a mix of residents, providing different types of accommodation depending on need (e.g. assisted living, shared facilities). The aim of the project was to change the social housing offer by applying the principles of community-led housing to the development of a social housing estate.

The entire design and development process was done in partnership with residents – including marginalised groups such as young adults with special educational needs – giving them the power to create a home and community that serves their needs.

Without going over budget or beyond expected timelines, the project was completed to create a truly inclusive community. The housing estate provides quality housing at around half the price of a similar apartment in Eindhoven and encourages people from all backgrounds to live side by side. It is home to around 600 residents who continue to manage many aspects of the estate and initiate new ideas for its development.

Habitat3

Habitat3 believe having a home is the first step to inclusion. In Catalonia just 2% of the region's housing stock is destined for social rent compared to the 15% European average, and 450,000 homes lie empty in the region. Through a variety of funding streams, Habitat3 acquires properties that are not suitable for rental on the private market. They then renovate these empty homes to house disadvantaged people, where the amount residents pay in rent depends on their income and ability to pay.

The renovation work on properties is done in collaboration with social enterprises – where socially excluded people are trained and employed to carry out renovations. Habitat3's approach not only increases the supply of affordable housing, but also increases skills and job prospects for vulnerable communities with meaningful skills and employment.



© Debbie Castro

“We need to think differently and need more creativity and imagination as a society. Doing the same is not inclusion.”

Caroline Macfarland,
Common Vision



© Natalia Martinez

“Speaking to those taking part is easy... what’s tricky is speaking to those who are not taking part. This is critical to real inclusivity, so how do we do it?”

Megan Cannons,
L&Q



“The easy thing [to do] is not always the best thing.”

Tricia Patel,
Pollard Thomas Edwards

Cross-cutting themes

The following two topics have emerged as crucially important to improve fairness and diversity. These themes have implications for the whole built environment sector, regardless of your specialism.

Community engagement

People build communities: this was the key message shared with us by Yoo Capital during the community engagement workshop. Through their work with the redevelopment of Shepherd’s Bush Market and in Olympia, Yoo Capital have spent some serious time building relationships and trust. They wanted to be part of the community beyond the development ambitions – an approach we all should be taking. We need to start letting communities define the agenda and bring new voices in to reframe development processes that work for everyone.

Procurement

We can use procurement to radically improve diversity in our sector, and make sure those we are working with better reflect the communities that could most serve to benefit from a fairer city.

LHC shared a new procurement framework developed with LB Southwark. Together, they went the extra mile to reach diverse, smaller and emerging architecture practices, changing the application process to make it more accessible and bringing fresh faces to the table.

Learning points

- **Measuring impact for people** – both L&Q and Argent are taking people-focused, qualitative approaches to monitoring social value that focus strongly on listening to communities – recognising that individuals have their own stories in a community, and are not just statistics.
- **Do not fear being transparent with stakeholders** – build trust by being open with the community and others about the constraints and competing priorities of your project. When it comes to engagement, the easy approach is not always the best. It requires time, energy and commitment.
- **Time and effort is required to really understand the needs of our most vulnerable communities** – we simply have to step up and make this happen. This could mean reconsidering our community engagement policies and strategies, building in more time within our processes or broadening the range of people we work and engage with to make sure we’re using the right expertise to do this work meaningfully.
- **Stop using the term ‘hard to reach’,** and instead understand how unwelcoming, inaccessible and uninspiring traditional methods of engagement in placemaking and planning can be. We as professionals must make ourselves easier to access by being more open and creative with our community engagement.
- **Change procurement approaches** to give communities ownership of and responsibility for change in their area.

PLACES

The case studies in this section demonstrate a range of places where addressing inequalities has been high on the agenda. From London to the Midlands to Northern Ireland, these place-based projects provide inspiration that can be transferred to other urban contexts to create fairer neighbourhoods, towns and cities.

Peckham Library Square

Peckham Library Square is an open space surrounded by a leisure centre, library, park and high street in one of the most diverse parts of London. But as it stands, it does not work for the local community. LB Southwark told us about their plans to revitalise the square and change their approach to make sure the local community is reflected.

A transformative approach

The Peckham Library Square project grew out of two significant issues:

1. Black Lives Matter and the council's response.
2. The need to improve the square to reduce anti-social behaviour and conflict between users, improve connectivity, and ensure local people feel safe and welcome.

Southwark Stands Together (SST) is an initiative started by LB Southwark in June 2020 in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. It is a commitment to address racial inequalities and make sure the council is taking a proactive approach, focusing on how they can listen and learn, and then tackle racism, inequality and injustice within the council and across the borough.

Around the same time, LB Southwark carried out an exercise to create a new procurement framework for architecture and design services. Following its completion, the council received a backlash from architecture practices as well as the GLA and the professional press, as the practices selected did not reflect the diversity of the borough.

The council recognised it needed to change its approach and refocus on how to genuinely understand, and have an impact on, disadvantaged and marginalised communities. It saw the opportunity to use Peckham Library Square as a pilot project for SST to:

- Involve a much broader range of local people than the council has done previously – reaching those who don't normally come forward in discussions about the future of their neighbourhood.
- Appoint professionals to lead the project that represent the diversity of local people.
- Address the inequalities in the built environment sector by supporting an emerging BAME-led design practice.
- Develop designs that genuinely evolve out of conversation and collaboration with the community.

The objectives for the improvements to the square itself are to:

- Create space which local people identify with, and feel ownership of, that is anchored in the hopes and aspirations of local people.
- Improve safety.
- Create a multi-purpose space that can accommodate formal events, such as markets, and also provide a space to relax.
- Better incorporate a major cycle route through the borough.
- Better integrate the square into the town centre.

Local residents will be included at every stage of the design process, setting a new standard for representing the borough's rich diversity for all future public realm and infrastructure projects.

“I hope they deliver a space that is truly community-centric, safe by day as well as night, and set up to allow for the flourishing and celebration of the creative arts and Peckham’s unique Peckham-ness.”

Mickey Smith, Peckham venue owner and member of ‘the architect selection’ panel



© LB Southwark

Improving diversity and engagement

The backlash to their architecture and design framework, along with heightened political and public awareness of the need to address inequalities that have come about as a result of Covid and the Black Lives Matter movement, resulted in a key moment for the council. SST represents the council’s commitment to doing things differently so that there is deliberate action to address racial and structural inequalities across the whole borough.

There has been a strong emphasis on community engagement from the start of the Peckham Library Square project, guided by SST. Spheron Architects were selected through a panel of local residents, including young people. This emerging BAME-led practice impressed the panel with their exciting and dynamic approach, and understanding of Peckham.

Alongside the council, Spheron have developed an enhanced programme of engagement and have immersed themselves in the locality. Their approach has included:

- Extensive workshops and talks in local schools and churches
- One-to-one discussions with local people (businesses, market traders, passers-by)
- A permanent presence on the square in the council-owned shop on Peckham High Street
- A social media strategy focusing on platforms such as Instagram and Facebook to reach a younger audience
- Work with religious institutions
- Printed surveys/flyers
- Work with local disability groups to understand how to make the space welcoming and accessible.

One example of the project going beyond the standard approach to community engagement is their Breaking The Glass Ceiling (BTGC) podcast.¹² This series includes a section titled “Peckham Stories” that intends to ensure the square reflects residents’ wants, needs and concerns through conversations with local people. They will feature themes that have come through as important to BAME communities through the initial engagement. These include employment and business, housing (social housing and links to classism, mental and physical health and communities), education and community spaces, and youth facilities.

The series is hosted by Joelle D’Fontaine, a LGBTQ+ and BAME community figure, and will feature members of the local community. The podcast will be used as a conversation starter for more online activity with marginalised communities, generating ideas for the future of Peckham Library Square.

Emerging impact on inequalities

As Peckham Library Square enters the design phase, here are some reflections on lessons learned to date:

- The amount of time spent listening and engaging with local people has fully immersed Spheron in the locality of Peckham which, in turn, has informed the design. LB Southwark feel confident that the design will better serve local people.
- Students at Harris Academy were not receptive to early efforts to engage with them. Spheron then ran an art day asking students what they wanted from Peckham Square and it became a fun activity. The head teacher mentioned that the children who had been the most disruptive or disengaged were the most forthcoming with this project, reflecting the success of this creative approach.
- Spheron, an emerging practice themselves, have received support from the council and been able to increase the size of their team as a result of the project.

Friary Park

Friary Park is a residential-led mixed use development in Acton, West London. Housing association Catalyst has been working on redevelopment plans since 2013, with the aim of providing more homes, improving housing quality and wellbeing for the existing community, and making the area safer and better connected. The housing association is both the landowner and manager of the estate and has entered a joint venture partnership with developer Mount Anvil to transform the estate.

Establishing relationships with the community

Working with the community has been intrinsic to the project. Catalyst and Mount Anvil presented themselves as a single team and set out a clear structure together to determine the level of resident involvement for different aspects of the project as follows:

- **Create** – things residents could help shape in creative ways – such as the design and activities for the new community square.
- **Select** – things residents could be given clear choices on – such as what sort of improvements to make to the public spaces.
- **Inform** – things they wouldn't expect residents to have to do but they should know about – such as the design options for their homes.

The project team recognised that at times they got things wrong. At first, they were too heavy with their communications and residents said they felt overloaded. Now they take a different approach, trying to fit in with other activities taking place. They held BBQs to get people out and talking, and supported community projects, using these as an opportunity to talk to people about the future of their area. The team also upped their game when it came to online consultation. In addition, the Residents' Steering group meets monthly with the regeneration team to represent the views and aspirations of customers on the estate.

Making affordability work

Catalyst and Mount Anvil have managed to make the numbers stack up while sticking to their affordable homes commitment. The development is tenure blind – with no different access or perceivable differences between homes of different tenures.

Following discussions with the Residents' Steering Group, it was decided that facilities like the gym and cinema screening rooms would not require a contribution from those in affordable homes, but that they would be given the option to opt-in. Being able to have these conversations and reach a compromise together demonstrates the strength of partnership between Catalyst, Mount Anvil and the residents.

Improving lives beyond housing

Another partnership that demonstrates how the scheme is seeking to improve residents' lives is with Sustrans, to make cycling an easy choice for residents. There will be a cycle hub as part of the scheme, and the plan is for Sustrans to continue to promote walking and cycling at Friary Park on an ongoing basis.

Reflecting on these successes at Friary Park, here are tips for building effective partnerships that reduce inequalities:

- **Do not underestimate the value of a joint venture** – each organisation brings different strengths and can learn from each other.
- **If the culture is right and the vision is shared, it will work** – it just might take some time to get there!
- **Tenure blind developments do work** – challenge questions about viability and work with residents on what works best for them.
- **Listen to residents** – they know their space, they use it; take the time to understand their views.





Belfast Urban Childhoods

As part of their City Resilience Strategy,¹³ Belfast City Council wanted to take a more strategic approach to transform the city centre through child-led design. This followed the success of a pop-up park at Castle Place,¹⁴ prompting calls for more family-friendly open spaces.¹⁵

With support from the Resilient Cities Network, Arup's award-winning¹⁶ Belfast Urban Childhoods Masterplan¹⁷ was created with Belfast City Council to support these aspirations. The Masterplan sets out a design framework and strategy to create a healthy, inclusive and child-friendly city centre, while addressing resilience challenges like prevalent car use and air pollution.

To better understand young people's aspirations for their city, five workshops were run with 43 citizens aged 6 to 18 years. Belfast City Council and youth workers facilitated the sessions, guided by tools provided by Arup. The workshops took place in communities on the fringes of the city centre, which were purposefully cut off from the space by roads during the Northern Irish conflict. Young people said that they felt familiar with the city centre but did not feel a connection to it. They had lots of ideas about ways they could reconnect – by making public space more fun, creating play routes and increasing street activity to improve perceptions of safety.

Creating a toolkit

The result of this engagement work is the Urban Childhoods Toolkit featuring a menu of tools, replicable design ideas and interventions aimed at addressing existing constraints across Belfast. One important feature is the flexibility that design ideas offer for reaction to both current and future needs. Covid has shown us how rapidly things can change and the need to design spaces that are adaptable.

The toolkit offers ideas that can be tested through meanwhile interventions, trying out different ways to activate spaces going through change, before implementing permanently (or not). It provides resources to support local governments and communities to initiate design processes by assessing, prioritising and proposing child- and family-friendly interventions based on principles of utilising empty plots, stitching the urban fabric together and activating open spaces. Small-scale interventions have already been trialled using the framework, including a pop-up play park designed by children in an area previously known for anti-social behaviour.¹⁸ The meanwhile intervention was originally planned to remain in place for two years, but the park's success as a welcome outdoor family space during lockdown has prompted calls to make it permanent.¹⁹

Good design for children is good design for all

But why design for children? Child-friendly urban planning factors in issues like safety, air quality and accessibility. This benefits everyone, but especially groups like wheelchair users, older people, caregivers and women, whose needs are often not prioritised in design but are the people who serve to benefit most from building a fair and inclusive city.

The masterplanning toolkit Arup has created for Belfast is all about doing things differently and thinking beyond the norm – a child's imagination knows no bounds! Creating replicable design frameworks using toolkits like this one means we can embed a forward-thinking strategy into all our design processes, with fairer outcomes for all.



© Arup

Co-location in the heart of Deptford

Deptford Lounge²² is an award-winning community hub designed by Pollard Thomas Edwards (PTE)²¹ for LB Lewisham, combining a school, library, café, sports facilities, 11 artist studios, a new urban square and 38 flats. Completed in 2012, the project's aim was to bring these facilities together to help address the issues faced by deprived communities in Deptford.

The ambition of Deptford Lounge was to take advantage of the town centre location to create a hub for life-long learning and building connections amongst Deptford's diverse population. PTE worked closely with local people throughout the design process, aiming to create a place that can be enjoyed by anyone regardless of age or ability. All services and spaces are fully accessible for wheelchair users, with user-friendly toilets and shower facilities. School pupils designed the playground structure, with the architects ensuring it was equally welcoming to students with special educational needs.

Outside of school hours, spaces within the school are open for public use. These include the assembly room, rooftop ball courts and a resource centre for start-up businesses. This flexible use of shared spaces has given everyone in the community a place to come together. Through the pandemic it has provided a lifeline for a local cinema faced with closure, and rooms were hired out at reduced rates to an Arabic school in exchange for hosting a cultural day in the Lounge for the local community.

Impact

At the time of development, 31% of pupils had special educational needs, and 28% were from one of the UK's most deprived wards. The library has made it easy for children to join an activity straight after school, or parents who are lacking connections in the area can use it as a space to socialise and learn before or after drop-offs. It provides a vital space for the community to come together, without having to spend money.

Placing the library within the school also saw an increase of over 100,000 visitors a year and a total of over one million visitors in its first year. Income generation at Deptford Lounge (largely through room hire) has increased almost tenfold – from £20k to £180k – all money which is reinvested into the community facility. It provided events and activities reaching nearly 7,000 people in 2017 compared to just over 1000 in 2012.

Pupils of Tidemill Academy now benefit from bigger and better facilities, and a safe and high-quality environment that provides a better space for learning, creativity and more healthy lifestyles. The headteacher commented that it has 'made an enormous impact on the quality of education our pupils receive'.²² In addition, the development has improved the public realm of Giffin Square and kickstarted the development of the nearby railway arches.

Learning for recovery

The scheme pushes the boundaries of co-location – including uses that don't typically coexist such as housing and a primary school. While this presented logistical challenges, the design team recognised that to address issues such as overcrowded housing, anti-social behaviour, poor skills attainment and social isolation, a holistic approach was key to solving them. In a recovery context, this approach to co-location is one we can learn from to maximise collaboration and impact in the face of ever-decreasing budgets.



© Pollard Thomas Edwards



© Montagu Evans

Coventry city centre south

As a city largely rebuilt after World War II, there has been no major regeneration in Coventry since and the city centre has seen a decline, with many shops closing down or relocating. Life expectancy in the north of the city can be up to 10 years less than for those living in the south. As a student town, the city struggles to retain young people after graduation.

These challenges are being tackled head on with the new mega-project City Centre South (CCS) – a collaborative £500 million project from Coventry City Council, West Midlands Combined Authority and Shearer Property Group, with Montagu Evans as consultants facilitating the collaboration between the council and partners.

CCS is a strategic, 15-acre site in Coventry that has planning consent to create a brand new, mixed-tenure, residential community with up to 1,300 homes. In addition, the main commercial area will be better linked to the city centre through the improvement of existing public realm and the development of new walking and cycling routes. A new cultural space, retail opportunities, cafes, a health hub, and leisure and community facilities are all part of the project.

New opportunities

Initial plans approved in 2012 saw a heavy retail focus in the development, but recent challenges in retail coupled with the Covid-19 pandemic changed that. “The pandemic has condensed 10 years of change into 18 months” explained Councillor Richard Moon, Director of Property and Development at CCS. It accelerated trends in inequalities and the development now has a new focus. Coventry City Council is keen to make the city centre an attractive place to both live and work, responding to the new needs of our cities post-pandemic.

We know that Covid has further increased difficulties in access to education and employment for under-represented groups.²³ In Coventry, the pandemic saw unemployment double to 7.8%. The community are enthusiastic to see the development get started. For Councillor Moon, increasing the skills and jobs base of Coventry is “one of the best ways to effectively deal with the inequality in this city.” The scheme will bring 1,700 full-time jobs to the city by 2026 – not including the potential further benefit of student talent retention following improvements to the city’s night life and cultural offer, and the attraction of new businesses following the redevelopment. This has the potential to reverse the huge divide between the north and south of the city.

Coventry University is the sixth largest in the UK and is at the forefront of research and development in technology, electrification and innovation. The region is known for its advanced manufacturing and engineering, particularly in the automotive and aerospace sectors. Despite this, the city struggles to retain graduates. In response, the council has been taking steps to improve Coventry’s Night-Time Economy – opening a new live music venue and creating new student accommodation at the heart of the city to create a more vibrant atmosphere.

What can we learn?

Partnership working has been key to the project so far. Montagu Evans has been assisting developers and the council to navigate their working relationship. Key to this has been getting partners to agree on goals and objectives, which have had to shift rapidly to adjust to the changing context.

The initial project proposal required a rethink because it did not respond adequately to the issues faced in Coventry, especially post-pandemic. With the shift in focus away from purely retail towards a mix of housing, retail and culture the council are now seeking a new partner to ensure the scheme is delivery-led and aligns with the council’s objectives.

We know collaboration has been central to this project, but what else can we learn from Coventry’s experience with large-scale urban regeneration?

- **Flexibility is key** – like many of us, CCS changed its approach in response to the pandemic to adapt to new trends and economic conditions. Do not get too hung up on a certain delivery model.
- **When working with long-term regeneration developments, there needs to be a balance between delivery and design-led approaches.** Good design is important, but it shouldn’t be at the expense of delivering results – something communities as well as partners are keen to see.
- **Focus on young people** – through the Building recovery programme, we’ve seen that taking a child- or youth-led approach to decision making and design means better outcomes for all. Coventry have recognised that unless they invest in making a city attractive for young people, they will fail to capitalise on the opportunity of recovery and address the stark inequalities between the north and south of the city.



Aberfeldy, Poplar

Owned and managed by Poplar HARCA,²⁴ Aberfeldy is an estate and neighbourhood bounded by the A12, A13 and River Lea in East London. It is among the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in the country.²⁵ With regeneration work starting in 2012, Poplar HARCA and developer partner EcoWorld London are building more than 1,000 new homes, introducing new retail and workspace, and implementing public realm improvements and active travel provision – all while working closely with the community to build a place that is welcoming, safe and secure for all.

Aberfeldy is in its third development stage. 901 homes have already been delivered, 29% of which are affordable rent. The Aberfeldy masterplan was designed with residents to draw out its industrial history and connect it to the wider area. As well as new homes for all existing and incoming residents, the scheme will also deliver new green spaces, and health and community facilities.

From the outset, the community has been at the heart of the masterplan design process – a commitment shared by Poplar HARCA and EcoWorld. All existing residents have been offered the option to remain living in Aberfeldy and Poplar HARCA have a 'one move' policy. In October 2020 a resident ballot saw a 91% voter turnout, with 93% of residents voting yes to the plans.

But, like many regeneration schemes, work at Aberfeldy will span many, many years. It is vital to respond to the changing needs of communities and thinking has had to evolve throughout the scheme. Community consultations moved online, and the pandemic created a new desire for improved open space as well as spaces within homes that are suitable for working from home. These considerations have been incorporated into the new Aberfeldy masterplan.

Meanwhile at the High Street

Revitalising Aberfeldy's high street has been another key part of the scheme. The colourful shop fronts of locally incubated businesses are adorned with patterns inspired by the Bangladeshi Kantha tradition of recycling used textiles to make something new – a nod to the cultural heritage in the community.

Poplar HARCA have taken a meanwhile approach to the high street, which will eventually be redeveloped, nurturing local enterprise to build identity and a strong local economy. Working with existing and new tenants, Poplar HARCA has supported



Images from Future of London's Aberfeldy field trip



homegrown enterprises in trialling and growing their businesses, providing a one-year rent-free period to new tenants, followed by below market rates.

Key to the high street's success is making sure the businesses that operate there offer what the community actually want. Nearly all the businesses are locally owned, and anyone looking to set up on the high street has to apply and pitch their ideas through Poplar HARCA. They then help business owners grow their confidence, supporting them with the seemingly small things that have big impacts, such as making stores wheelchair accessible and linking them to different funding opportunities. The meanwhile nature of the high street allowed for experimentation with regards to what does and does not work for the community – and being better connected to residents means local enterprises can serve their needs better.

Making for change

Local enterprise incubation continues past the high street and up the A12 to Poplar Works. The fashion and creative hub has been created using under-used garages to provide a community café, affordable workspace, and exciting skills development and employment opportunities for the community. In Aberfeldy there has been an appetite for getting involved in the fashion industry, and there is existing talent in the community to build on.

Poplar Works is home to Making for Change,²⁶ the outcome of a collaboration between students from the London College of Fashion and women's prison HMP Downview. The project provides employment and training opportunities for women transitioning to more stable lives, as well as for the wider community. Running a series of creative projects with residents helped Poplar Works get to know them better and design a programme that was appropriate for their needs and wants.

From the high street to Poplar Works, Poplar HARCA and partners are clearly getting something right. Identifying local talent, listening to people's needs and implementing effective schemes to improve the skills of local people and drive recovery are key features of the Aberfeldy regeneration. Central to this has been a flexible approach – like experimenting with meanwhile uses – allowing for adaptability over time. Anyone working with local economic development or regeneration should look to this as a strong example of doing things the right way.



APPROACHES

The following case studies aren't necessarily based on a locale, but provide evidence of how organisations across the built environment are making changes to the way they do things to improve their impact, and stepping up to the role they play in addressing urban inequalities.

Changing approaches to community and environment

Countryside are taking a whole systems approach to improving the way they work with communities, to maximise social value in their projects and build sustainable, thriving places. Their Building Communities strategy goes beyond the provision of physical infrastructure, taking into account wider aspects of the built environment such as green space, social and digital infrastructure, and transport that answer to local needs. The approach also focuses on building relationships to deliver social value and a range of other benefits to that community over the long term. It is a commitment to create and support strong and resilient communities through meaningful engagement, empowerment, partnerships and stewardship through Countryside's developments.

The developer's new internal framework was created following research conducted with think tank Localis. Together, the partners held roundtables with local councils, housing associations and the Royal Town Planning Institute to investigate how they, as the developer, can improve social value and engagement in the community. They consulted with the firm's core delivery partners to understand what was important to them. The framework drew on remarks from past resident consultations to further inform how the new framework should be constructed.

Countryside have worked to embed this new approach at all levels internally, as well as within their supply chains and with key stakeholders. It provides clarity and certainty as to what Countryside want from their partners in order to ensure Building Communities is truly an approach integrated into their developments. The approach is deeply connected to Countryside's other strategic priorities of sustainability, diversity, equity and inclusion, and technology.

Building communities in action

One of the ways Countryside has delivered value in their developments is by maximising the socioeconomic impact in the local area. One notable example is the Dollis Valley Estate Regeneration in LB Barnet – delivered in partnership with L&Q and LB Barnet. The estate faces many of the issues associated with post-war estates, including economic deprivation, social exclusion, and low educational achievement and attainment. A key commitment for regeneration was ensuring the development created significant employment and skills opportunities for the local area. A bespoke Employment and Training Strategy was implemented through the development, ensuring that more people living in the community have access to the opportunities that arise through the regeneration. In addition to delivering apprenticeships and work placements throughout the regeneration, Countryside worked with LB Barnet and the Department for Work and Pensions to fund a local enterprise that provides a fully funded suite of accredited training programmes supporting local people. The organisation has experience and expertise working with members of the community who have traditionally struggled with education and employment. This approach maximises the social value created through the regeneration for the community.

In the Canning Town and Custom House area Countryside led on a major regeneration scheme that delivered much needed housing (649 mixed-tenure homes), a new school and community facilities. To oversee the running of the development and ensure its long-term, sustainable management, a resident management company was set up, with local residents, and representatives from





Countryside, LB Newham and Affinity Sutton on the board of directors. Having residents heavily involved in the management of the development helps to make mixed-tenure work for all and guarantees the delivery of high quality and value-for-money estate management.

What can we learn?

Now more than ever, changing the way we do things is critical to overcome the widening inequalities that threaten our cities. Looking to Countryside, what can we learn?

- For new approaches to work, external partners need to be onboard. Explain why this can be beneficial to them in their role, and learn the drivers and triggers for different partners.
- New approaches to reducing inequalities need to be embedded across the organisation. Bring everyone in the organisation along on the journey. Appoint employees, such as recent graduates, as ambassadors to be advocates and promote the approach.
- Implementing a new strategy in a large organisation is not a static process but a continuous evolution. Make sure new approaches are actively being implemented in the planning of current and future projects.



© Lewis Silkin

“If zoning (as proposed in planning reforms) were to go ahead, communities would be hugely disadvantaged.”

Sara Hanrahan,
Lewis Silkin

Maximising the planning system for fairness

We spoke to Sara Hanrahan,²⁷ Partner at Lewis Silkin about how the built environment sector can use the planning system as a tool to promote fairer cities.

When it comes to new development, Section 106 (S106) is the main mechanism local authorities have to maximise the benefit for local people. This includes, for example, developers providing affordable homes, new schools or cycle routes.

Affordable housing is the most obvious link with equality impacts, but Sara warns that S106 leaves things “up for grabs”. Agreements can be vague, or – due to the time between signing the agreement and implementing the mitigation agreed – measures sometimes do not go far enough. The detail after the agreement has been finalised determines the impact a development will have on inequalities, and can depend on the negotiation skills of the team within the local authority or other consultees.

Planning reform

The Planning White paper released by central government in 2020 proposed scrapping S106 and replacing it with a zoning mechanism and a new form of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) which would effectively be a payment to local authorities for things like public space and affordable housing. Although planners and developers recognise that S106 can sometimes slow down delivery, this proposal set alarm bells ringing.



The zoning approach assumed that any given community would come forward at the planning stage and provide their views on what is right for their area and where funds should be directed. This assumed a level of knowledge, understanding and engagement with the planning process at a strategic level that currently rarely exists. If the zoning approach were to be taken forward, it would require a much more proactive approach from local authorities and others involved in placemaking. The process would need to be accessible and creative, so it is worthwhile for communities and results in the critical infrastructure needed.

There are also concerns within the sector about the new First Home scheme.²⁸ First Homes demands 25% of a scheme is sold at an affordable market sale price. While this might help young buyers to get on the property ladder, it is unlikely to have much of an impact on equality because it could be at the expense of a good proportion of affordable rented homes.

This is because developers may use First Homes to satisfy their affordable housing requirement within their development, rather than using a range of mechanisms such as affordable rent and London Living rent. Even a discounted home for private sale will likely be out of reach for many – recent analysis by the *Guardian* found that a couple with a combined salary of £94,000 would be unable to afford a mortgage in 13 boroughs in London.²⁹

With regards to permitted development rights, there have been concerns that adding new floors onto a building and changing uses from, for example, an office to a residential block without planning permission or public consultation could lead to issues with minimum living space and natural light. These are more likely to affect disadvantaged communities who have less choice in where they live. The government has now responded, adding new requirements on natural light and minimum space.



Using the existing system to address inequalities

We are in a hiatus at the moment, as the Planning Bill was expected in Autumn 2021 and is now on hold. We must assume the existing system will continue and that as such, developers, local authorities and consultants need to look at how we maximise the benefits of the system to address inequalities. Here's how:

- **Local plans** – the drive towards digital consultation as opposed to notices on lampposts is to be encouraged. However, a fully digitised process could alienate those lacking digital access and confidence. We do not want to cut off parts of the community; a balance is required.
- **It is all about collaboration** – hostility and lack of trust between the public and private sector can be really damaging. Developers want to ensure they deliver a healthy return on investment in the context of high land and construction costs. In turn, local authorities can be worried about not getting the best for their area and will be under pressure from residents and community groups to maximise contributions from new developments. Mindsets need to be changed and challenged to boost the benefits for our communities.
- **Maximise use of CIL** – local charities and community groups, who know what their communities need, should have better links with councils to come up with useful and effective ways to spend this money.

It remains to be seen if planning changes will come to fruition and what impact these will have on a fair and inclusive recovery. But there is potential, given the levelling up agenda, for all of us to maximise the system to make gains for equalities in our cities. It's up to us to advocate approaches which put community voices front and centre.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Our recommendations draw from intelligence we have gathered throughout the 10-month programme. They follow the five key themes from the Building recovery insights report (housing, public space, transport, culture and skills) as well as three cross-cutting themes which we know affect all sectors and specialisms (decision making, community engagement and diversity). The final theme relates specifically to maximising the opportunity of recovery now.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Housing is critical to happy, healthy and resilient cities. But it is also a key driver of social inequality, and affordable housing is one of London's greatest challenges for which there is no easy fix. We know development is extremely challenging right now considering the impacts of Covid, Brexit, high land values, building safety regulations and the transition to net zero. But if we get housing right, we can support better health, education and access to employment opportunities. The Building recovery programme has highlighted examples from the UK and across Europe of good quality, affordable housing made viable. Now is the time to dedicate the energy and commitment required to use housing as a way to enhance the lives of residents and reduce inequalities in our cities.

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
<p>Get tenure mix right</p> <p>Getting tenure mix right without disproportionately affecting lower-income residents and making schemes unviable is possible. Mount Anvil and Catalyst Housing show this in Friary Park. Offer residents the opportunity to opt-in or out of certain facilities. Work transparently with communities and ensure they have a say in the design of facilities and services so that the views and aspirations of all groups are represented in mixed-tenure developments.</p>	<p>Developers and house builders</p> <p>Housing associations</p>
<p>Apply community-led housing (CLH) principles to social housing developments</p> <p>A sense of pride and investment in the place where someone lives can make a big difference to how a person feels about their life. When developing or redeveloping social housing, strive to give residents full or partial control over the design, development and management. The Space-S project in Eindhoven took this approach at no extra cost or time to the housing association involved. Not only has this contributed to resident empowerment, but it has helped develop a sense of community cohesion and reduced management costs in the long run.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p>
<p>Develop clearer processes and pathways to community-led housing (CLH)</p> <p>There is growing excitement and energy behind the CLH model in the UK – but advocates are struggling to convince key stakeholders and there is a lack of clarity surrounding the model. Develop clearer processes and pathways for CLH and help communities turn ambition into reality. Speak to those who have worked with CLH models to find out how the processes can be integrated into more standard approaches. And remember, there are fantastic examples of this work in action abroad as well as in the UK.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Greater London Authority</p> <p>Not-for-profit organisations working with community-led housing</p>
<p>Develop skills and employment through housing</p> <p>Use retrofit and new schemes as an opportunity to reduce inequalities through the provision of training and meaningful employment. Habitat3 used the renovation of their properties as an opportunity to provide skills and employment to socially excluded people. LB Camden is doing the same through their social housing retrofit programme that has a 30-year delivery timescale. Not only does this approach maximise social value through capital spending, providing new long-term job opportunities, but it will give people the skills they need as we transition to net zero.</p>	<p>Developers</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p>
<p>Build housing that truly reflects the diversity of the urban population</p> <p>Wherever possible, housing developments should be integrated so everyone who may want to live there is welcome, including older people, large families, people with disabilities and learning difficulties, and the LGBTQ+ community. Don't guess what specific groups need; involve a broad range of people in the planning and design process to create places that work for all. Developments like Space-S in Eindhoven show this being done in the right way, using social organisations to reach out to specific marginalised groups and ensuring design processes are inclusive and accessible.</p>	<p>Developers and house builders</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Architects and designers</p>

PUBLIC SPACE

The pandemic saw a huge overall increase in the use of our parks, streets and squares, but some spaces exclude groups. In responding to the increased demand for better quality public spaces, many urban practitioners – regardless of their sector – find that understanding the needs of communities is an obstacle to creating places and spaces that work for all. It's time to step up and take a new approach to designing and managing public space that is inclusive, safe and sustainable.

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
<p>Take a child-friendly approach to the design of places</p> <p>This approach to urban planning puts issues like safety, air quality and accessibility at the top of the agenda. This benefits everyone, especially groups like wheelchair users, older people, carers and women, whose needs are not often prioritised in design. Focusing on young people has the potential to make our city centres and public spaces far more inclusive for all.</p>	<p>Greater London Authority</p> <p>Local authorities</p>
<p>Create value in all public spaces</p> <p>Small spaces and incremental gains are valuable. Help address unequal access to open spaces by utilising under-used spaces, like excess parking spaces, to create parklets and improve street greening. Use this as an opportunity to implement more community-led projects in public spaces.</p>	<p>Greater London Authority</p> <p>Local authorities</p>
<p>Focus on public safety</p> <p>Public spaces are too often designed by, and therefore reflect the needs of, white men. Prioritise the safety of vulnerable people in public space by bringing more women, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities and LGBTQ+ people into the design process to ensure public spaces are built to work for a broader range of people.</p>	<p>Greater London Authority</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Designers</p>

CULTURE

Culture isn't just something that happens in a museum or gallery. Every community has its own cultural identity that is tied to a sense of belonging. It's time to see culture as a tool for building resilience – achieving both social and economic benefit. Cultural programmes should be viewed not only as a tool to help communities thrive, but as a driver for local economic development – a catalyst for generating economic activity and employment opportunities.

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
<p>Support local communities with cultural heritage projects to drive identity up the agenda</p> <p>Provide expertise, direction and resources, but let communities take the lead on developing projects and initiatives that reflect them best.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p>
<p>Make sure culture is a genuine part of a strategy</p> <p>Don't be tokenistic. Culture enables communities to draw on their strengths and tackle societal issues, but it must be rooted in the existing history, strengths and interests of an area. The Aberfeldy case study demonstrates how the culture of specific ethnic minorities and local textile skills has fed into the broader regeneration of the area.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Not-for-profit organisations</p>
<p>Use culture as a tool for engagement</p> <p>Finding activities which promote creativity and reflect communities' backgrounds can remove formality, make engagement more appealing and give participants a chance to develop skills while taking part.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Developers and house builders</p> <p>Architects and designers</p>

TRANSPORT

The way we move around the city has changed dramatically over the course of the pandemic. There is greater awareness of and interest in demand-led transport. And many want to get from A to B more sustainably. But, as highlighted by Katie Pennick at the Building Recovery conference, people with disabilities have been “significantly excluded from the conversation” in relation to transport. We need to take advantage of the greener travel habits seen throughout the pandemic, while ensuring change is inclusive and works for those who could most serve to benefit from inclusivity.

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
<p>Prioritise inclusivity alongside sustainability</p> <p>Bikes, assisted bikes and electric cars are all positive steps for a greener transport system but all of these pose issues for people with disabilities. Work closely with disabled people or those with expertise on accessible environments to make sure your development or neighbourhood is providing solutions that are not only environmentally friendly but also inclusive.</p>	<p>Transport for London</p> <p>Local authorities</p>
<p>Push for active travel to be more inclusive</p> <p>Make sure that developments cater for assisted bikes as well as traditional cycles. Aim for a cycling modal share of 7%* – this has been put forward as a level likely to mean a broader range of people, particularly women and children, feel safe to cycle.</p>	<p>Transport for London</p> <p>Local authorities</p>
<p>Consider the impact on different communities</p> <p>Follow Transport for London's example and analyse how changes to transport will impact different ethnic minorities in specific areas. Diversity and inclusion have to be considered as part of sustainability. Consider local contexts more when making decisions that impact certain areas and weigh up the potential negative impacts on minority groups before implementation.</p>	<p>Transport for London</p>
<p>Maintain momentum</p> <p>The transport sector has adapted quickly in the pandemic but sometimes at the expense of older people, people with disabilities and those with long-term health conditions. We should maintain momentum, but make sure it's done inclusively. Make the most of this new creative and collaborative work culture to engage with people with protected characteristics on new projects and new approaches, to make sure issues of accessibility and inclusivity are not overlooked.</p>	<p>Transport planners</p> <p>Local authorities</p> <p>Not-for-profit organisations such as Transport for All or Business Disability Forum</p>

*Modal share is the percentage of people using a particular type of transportation. In this case, the aim is for 7% of all journeys to be made by bicycle.

SKILLS

If we want to deliver a green and just recovery, we need to equip the current and next generations with the ability to do so. The built environment industry is well placed to invest in and develop a skilled workforce in green and growth industries while also addressing inequalities in skills and employment, and the lack of diversity of our sector. We should not miss out on this opportunity to become a leader in creating a modern and dynamic workforce built for a green recovery. The time is now!

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
Invest in future skills Change employment support programmes to ensure staff have the knowledge and connections to promote opportunities in green and growth industries, rather than relying on retail and hospitality. One example is training on air source heat pumps - making sure that we build a cohort of people with the right skills to install and maintain these as we transition from gas boilers.	Greater London Authority Transport for London Local authorities Housing associations
Achieve diversity through skills programmes The built environment sector faces a real shortage of young, diverse and skilled individuals. Develop green skills programmes specifically targeting vulnerable people (the Forward Trust is a great example) to meet future demand for skills and tackle inequalities at the same time.	Developers Local authorities Housing associations
Match training with employment opportunities Like Countryside have done, work with your supply chains and partners to promote continuity and engagement in green skills training and employment programmes. It is important for young people to see a clear career path from training through to employment.	Developers Local authorities

DECISION MAKING

How we decide what to do and who to engage with in any place-based project has for too long been focused on profit and efficiency. Procurement so often favours the usual suspects and leaves little room to promote smaller, more diverse organisations who can contribute so much to city making. Changing the way we measure success and track progress, as well as the way we procure projects and services, could have a huge impact on addressing inequalities if we are willing to reassess our processes. Our research has demonstrated that there is appetite amongst senior leaders to change accepted practice. Let's take advantage of this to make gains for the people who most need supporting.

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
<p>Think long term</p> <p>No one scheme or project will address the deep-rooted inequalities that have been highlighted since Covid. Commit to taking a long-term approach to monitoring the impact of your work on inequalities. Prioritise metrics around health and happiness, and how people feel about their area. And ensure you celebrate progress along the way to maintain stamina.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Developers and house builders</p>
<p>Go beyond the data to inform decision making</p> <p>Data won't necessarily explain the nuances within people's lives or reveal how people with protected characteristics are faring. Take people-focused, qualitative approaches to monitoring social value that focus strongly on listening to communities, as demonstrated by organisations such as Argent and L&Q.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Developers and house builders</p>
<p>Be prepared to start again</p> <p>Some of the case studies in this report have shown organisations are willing to admit they were not going far enough to ensure their processes and approaches were inclusive. Assess your decision-making structures and strategies on community engagement and sustainability to ensure they are doing as much as possible to address inequalities – like LHC have done for LB Southwark.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Developers and house builders</p> <p>Architects and designers</p>
<p>Change your procurement processes</p> <p>This will encourage suppliers or partners from beyond the usual suspects and give opportunities to smaller, emerging practices. As the LHC example on page 11 explains, consider adding a turnover cap to your framework, reducing insurance requirements and removing lengthy questions on policies and processes within the application.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p>
<p>Push the boundaries of flexibility and mixed use</p> <p>Use partnerships that have come out of Covid to explore the potential for budget and location sharing, which can help to address affordability for all of those who increasingly need to do more with less. As seen in the Deptford Lounge case study, strong leadership, confidence and a willingness to take risks are essential.</p>	<p>Developers</p> <p>Local authorities</p>

DIVERSITY

The Building recovery programme has repeatedly highlighted that people from ethnic minority backgrounds, people with disabilities, the LGBTQ+ community, women and working-class people are all under-represented in our sector. This means they are not influencing the debates and decision-making processes that determine the future of our cities. Our cities are still, therefore, being designed for a narrow demographic.

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
<p>Improve the diversity of people working in the built environment</p> <p>Across all sectors, employers should be looking to take part in recruitment and training programmes (such as FoL's Emerging Talent Programme) which actively support and encourage a much more diverse group of people to enter, and stay, in the profession. Use specialist networks for recruitment and develop attraction strategies. We need diversity at all levels so focus on policies that support retention: mentoring, professional development, staff experience in the workplace and who is included in narratives about the organisation. It's a root and branch approach.</p>	<p>Greater London Authority</p> <p>Transport for London</p> <p>Local Authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Developers and house builders</p> <p>Architects and designers</p>
<p>Start early</p> <p>Some argue that employment and training programmes start too late. As a sector we need to do more to work with schools to educate pupils from diverse backgrounds about the potential of a career in the built environment. Partnership working with not-for-profit organisations such as Blueprint for All and the Construction Youth Trust will be key to making this happen.</p>	<p>Greater London Authority</p> <p>Transport for London</p> <p>Local Authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Developers and house builders</p> <p>Architects and designers</p>
<p>Improve the diversity of your supply chain</p> <p>By changing your procurement processes you can work with more diverse suppliers and project partners. This might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing where and how you advertise • Changing the minimum turnover thresholds of the companies who can apply • Asking different questions on an application form or simplifying it • Going beyond rhetoric at interview to really understand an organisation's commitment to, and impact on, diversity and inclusion. 	<p>Greater London Authority</p> <p>Transport for London</p> <p>Local Authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p> <p>Developers and house builders</p>

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

This has come up time and time again throughout the programme. Our network knows we are not doing enough to genuinely engage with local people. Addressing the diversity of people working in our sector will support more understanding, connection and meaningful engagement so this next set of recommendations is closely linked with those above.

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
<p>Build skills and confidence</p> <p>Our research tells us that regardless of sector, we lack confidence in our community engagement skills and knowledge of the needs of our most deprived communities. Equip your teams so they can better understand the complex needs of communities and are able to work and communicate with them in a clear, collaborative way.</p>	<p>Greater London Authority Transport for London Local Authorities Housing associations Developers and house builders Architects and designers</p>
<p>Use non-traditional methods to reach young people</p> <p>Go beyond Facebook and Twitter with social media strategies that connect and engage younger audiences – and see how platforms such as Snapchat can create a starting point for discussion. In the design of Peckham Library Square, Spheron ran an art day to engage young people. We must find media platforms and external spaces for consultation that make young people feel comfortable.</p>	<p>Local authorities Housing associations Developers and house builders Architects and designers</p>
<p>Stop using the term 'hard to reach'</p> <p>Instead, make your language, processes and people easier to access and understand.</p>	<p>Local authorities Housing associations Developers and house builders Architects and designers</p>
<p>Be willing to adjust project timelines to allow more time and flexibility for community engagement</p> <p>Be prepared to come with no agenda and let the community define it. Reframe the process for developers so that expectations about timescales are realistic and that they have the resources to spend time on building relationships locally.</p>	<p>Local authorities Housing associations</p>
<p>Support local businesses</p> <p>During long-term regeneration projects, find ways to genuinely support existing local businesses (as shown in the Aberfeldy case study) so they can prosper in the new development, rather than be replaced or priced out.</p>	<p>Local authorities Housing associations</p>
<p>Balance digital engagement with face-to-face activities</p> <p>While digital can provide access to new audiences, it can also exclude people with limited access to technology and smart devices.</p>	<p>Local authorities Housing associations Developers and house builders Architects and designers</p>
<p>Create an ongoing learning culture</p> <p>Seek to understand the impact of your development in the long term. Maintain an ongoing relationship with residents and communities. Follow the example of Inbo architects in Space-S to build your understanding of what has worked for residents and how their needs are changing. Use this to inform future projects.</p>	<p>Architects and designers Developers</p>

MAXIMISING THE OPPORTUNITY OF RECOVERY

This final set of recommendations draws together some of the key learnings which relate to the very specific conditions of the current phase of Covid recovery.

Recommendation	Who it's aimed at
<p>Consider partnerships as a way to get funding</p> <p>Lack of funding has emerged as a perennial barrier. Use the huge shift in behaviour brought about by the pandemic, Brexit etc to rethink the role of partnerships in obtaining funding. Recovery funding is out there, but a lot of it is coming in from bigger institutions and central government. More than ever, we need to partner up to make bids and get better at sharing resources so we can all make the most of the funding opportunities currently available.</p>	<p>Private sector</p> <p>Public sector</p> <p>Not-for-profit organisations</p>
<p>Experiment</p> <p>Testing ideas doesn't just need to happen at the drawing board. Experimenting with meanwhile uses can be a good way to have an impact with a smaller budget and can also create accessible opportunities for increasing skills or supporting local businesses, as demonstrated by the Aberfeldy case study. But as we've learnt with the experience of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, make sure you consult and communicate well when trying out new ideas.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Developers</p> <p>Designers</p>
<p>Capitalise on levelling up</p> <p>With political focus on levelling up, there is an opportunity for the built environment sector to demonstrate that this needs to happen within our cities as well as at a regional level. One of the levelling up agenda's key goals is to address regional inequality by improving the standards of living across the country. Decision makers are tuned into these issues – use this political will to put pressure on every decision and negotiation to maximise the impact on reducing inequalities.</p>	<p>Local authorities</p> <p>Housing associations</p>

CONCLUSIONS

The building recovery programme has uncovered fundamental challenges and opportunities faced by the built environment sector to deliver fairer cities. This follows a difficult 18 months for the whole of society as we have made our way through the Covid-19 pandemic and have been exposed to the huge and persistent inequalities in the UK. Our programme has reinforced the fact that we have a long way to go when it comes to creating equitable places. We have not been doing enough, and simply accepting the status quo is no longer an option.

However, what has come through very strongly through our research is the desire amongst all of us within the sector to play our part in addressing the challenges to achieve fairer cities. Those involved in our programme have been positive, full of energy and ready to make change happen. We must act on the recommendations of this report now, while there is a window of political will and public support for action to capitalise on. We need to:

- **Lean on the open door** – speak to senior leaders who currently are open to changing thinking and approaches to make them more inclusive. Use this opportunity to affect the way we do things in the long term.
- **Maintain momentum** – keep in mind the pace of change we were able to adopt during the pandemic and promote this speed amongst our colleagues to address urban inequalities.
- **Focus on communities first** – radically change our engagement processes so that we take the time to work with communities as equals and come up with plans or projects that are built on this, rather than on guess work about what's best for them.
- **Celebrate successes** – addressing inequalities will not happen overnight and in order to maintain stamina and positivity, we need to find ways to mark achievements and highlight when we've taken a step forward.
- **Be accountable** – as demonstrated by our case studies, there are practical things we can all do to have an impact on inequalities. Make your own commitment.

USEFUL RESOURCES

We have compiled some useful resources related to Building recovery: closing the gap, many of which were showcased at our conference.

Future of London's Building recovery insights report

Outlining the challenges of a fair recovery from the first phase of this project
<https://bit.ly/3rMk915>

Public space

Arup – Report on queering public space
<https://bit.ly/3EBYPyY>

LLDC – Consultation on safety in public spaces
<https://bit.ly/3oz2ZBZ>

Skills

The Forward Trust – Information on their green sector recovery training & jobs pathway
<https://bit.ly/3y5Jqo6>

LB Camden – Climate action plan: social housing retrofit & skills programme
<https://bit.ly/31DkhVZ>

Transport

Arup – Using Agent-Based Modelling to plan for the future and consider how transport policy and schemes will affect different communities
<https://bit.ly/3EAlw6t>

Transport for All – Campaigns and research to support transport schemes by ensuring the needs of disabled and older people are considered from the outset
<https://bit.ly/3pDeRCn>

Social value and procurement

LHC – Architect Design Services Framework with a focus on increasing diversity
<https://bit.ly/3dtuCGi>

HACT – Social value approach for housing associations
<https://bit.ly/3IHcw2b>

Argent – Brent Cross Town Flourishing index is a new approach to measuring the health and wellbeing through a development
<https://bit.ly/3rPXjpg>

The Good economy – UK Social Housing: Building a sector-standard approach for ESG reporting. This proposes 10 themes and 45 ESG criteria for housing associations
<https://bit.ly/3dy3aHm>

Housing

Inbo – Video introducing the Space-S scheme and its inclusive approach
<https://bit.ly/3oBjWeY>

Housing Europe – Podcast series 'Making a House a Home'
<https://bit.ly/3rN8bV6>

Future of London – Our report from 2019 showcasing the potential of community-led housing
<https://bit.ly/31AUbTb>

Culture

LB Brent – Information on their London Borough of Culture 'No bass like home' project
<https://bit.ly/3IKIsbVOther>

LB Newham – Community Wealth Building strategy to support a fair and inclusive recovery
<https://bit.ly/3oyC9dh>

GLOSSARY

Community-Led Housing has no statutory definition and can take a variety of forms, but most schemes tend to follow this set of principles:

- Meaningful community engagement and consent. Communities do not necessarily have to initiate the conversation, or build homes themselves, though many do.
- There is a presumption that the community group or organisation will take a long-term, formal role in the ownership, stewardship or management of the homes.
- The benefits to the local area and/or specified community are clearly defined and legally protected in perpetuity.³⁰

Cultural identity is a person's self-identification with, or sense of belonging to, a particular group in relation to nationality, religion, language, ethnicity, locality and any other kind of social group that has its own distinct culture.

Demand-led transport is a user-oriented form of passenger transport characterised by flexible routes and smaller vehicles operating in shared-ride mode between pick-up and drop-off locations according to passengers' needs.³¹

Deprived communities are communities of groups and individuals that lack resources across income, employment, health, ability, education, skills, housing and/or living environment.

Fair/equitable cities provide equal, affordable opportunities for all and better serve the needs of people who could benefit most (including deprived communities, people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ+ community, younger and older people, and women).³²

Joint venture is a commercial agreement or enterprise in which two or more participants agree to pool their resources and co-operate to achieve a particular objective.

Meanwhile approach/use refers to the flexible and interchangeable short-term use of temporarily empty or not-in-use buildings and spaces until they can be brought back into commercial or permanent use.³³

Modal share is the share of passengers using a particular mode of transport (including cycling and walking) within the overall transport usage of an urban area.³⁴

Resident ballots give residents of places where development and regeneration work has been proposed the right to vote on whether to proceed or not.

Social value in the built environment is created when buildings, places and infrastructure support environmental, economic and social wellbeing, and in doing so improve the quality of life of people.³⁵

Tenure blind describes developments that are made up of mixed-tenure homes (i.e. social, private, affordable) that have no explicit external indicators of tenure type in the design and layout of the development.³⁶

END NOTES

1. Future of London. (2021) Building recovery: closing the gap insights report.
<https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/?ddownload=30669>
2. I-Sphere. (2021, August 23) Meeting the housing needs of BAME households in England: the role of the planning system. Institute for Social Policy, Housing, Equalities Research.
<https://i-sphere.site.hw.ac.uk/2021/08/23/role-of-planning-in-meeting-housing-needs-of-bame-households-in-england/>
3. Disability Rights UK. (2020, February 7) Nearly half of everyone in poverty is either a disabled person or lives with a disabled person.
<https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/news/2020/february/nearly-half-everyone-poverty-either-disabled-person-or-lives-disabled-person>
4. Friends of the Earth. Coronavirus: a green and fair recovery plan.
<https://friendsoftheearth.uk/climate/coronavirus-green-and-fair-recovery-plan>
5. Nanda, G. (2021, June 7) A fair recovery for our communities, good homes and better services – my focus as a G15 chair. Insight Housing.
<https://www.insidehousing.co.uk/comment/comment/a-fair-recovery-for-our-communities-good-homes-and-better-services--my-focus-as-g15-chair-70969>
6. Future of London. (2021) Building recovery: closing the gap insights report.
<https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/?ddownload=30669>
7. Future of London. Future London Leaders Candidates.
<https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/leadership/future-london-leaders/fll-candidates/>
8. Greater London Authority. (2020) Expanding London's Public Realm: Design Guide.
https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/expanding_londons_public_realm_combined_final.pdf
9. Wills, J. (2020, March 31) London's on-street parking takes up as much space as 10 Hyde Parks. City Monitor.
<https://citymonitor.ai/environment/london-s-street-parking-takes-much-space-10-hyde-parks-4972>
10. European Commission. New European Bauhaus: Delivery.
https://europa.eu/new-european-bauhaus/delivery_en#ecl-inpage-705
11. Bauhaus refers to a German school of architecture and design, founded in Germany in 1919. In Bauhaus design the emphasis is on a community of artists and designers working together to create buildings which respond to social need with functional design.
12. Future of London. (2021) Building recovery: closing the gap insights report.
<https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/?ddownload=30669>
13. Belfast City Council. Resilient Belfast.
<https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/resilientbelfast>
14. Smith, R. (2019, March 23) Belfast city centre 'pop-up' play park opens. Belfast Live.
<https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/belfast-news/belfast-city-centre-pop-up-16014629>
15. Clinton, O. (2020, August 28) Cathedral Gardens play park brings splash of colour to Belfast. Belfast Live.
<https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/belfast-news/cathedral-gardens-play-park-brings-18842655>
16. Landscape Institute. (2019) Landscape Institute Awards Finalists.
<https://awards.landscapeinstitute.org/finalists/>
17. Arup. Belfast Urban Childhoods Masterplan: bringing families back to the city.
<https://www.arup.com/projects/urban-childhoods-masterplan-belfast>
18. Belfast City Council. (2020, June 2) Toddler-designed park 'popping up' at Cathedral Gardens.
<https://www.belfastcity.gov.uk/News/Toddler-designed-park-popping-up-at-Cathedral-Ga>

19. Hughes, B. (2021, March 13) Calls to make Cathedral Gardens pop-up play park in Belfast city centre permanent. Belfast Live.
<https://www.belfastlive.co.uk/news/calls-make-cathedral-gardens-pop-20108972>
20. Deptford Lounge. <http://deptfordlounge.org.uk/>
21. Pollard Thomas Edwards. <https://www.pollardthomasedwards.co.uk/>
22. World Architecture News. (2012) Tidemill Primary School: Longer version.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wVd8GbtqhiM>
23. BTGC Podcasts. (2021, October 19) What is Breaking The Glass Ceiling Podcasts? BTGC Podcasts.
<https://anchor.fm/btgc/episodes/What-is-Breaking-The-Glass-Ceiling-Podcasts-e18vvbv>
24. Poplar HARCA. <https://www.poplarharca.co.uk/>
25. Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government. Indices of Deprivation: 2019 and 2015.
https://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html
26. Poplar Works. Making for Change Fashion Production.
<https://poplarworks.co.uk/programmes/making-for-change-production/>
27. Lewis Silkin. People: Sara Hanrahan.
<https://www.lewissilkin.com/en/people/sara-hanrahan>
28. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. (2021, May 24) Guidance: First Homes.
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes>
29. Duncan, P., Osborne, H., & Kommenda, N. (2021, April 19) Home ownership unaffordable despite 95% mortgages, analysis shows. The Guardian.
<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2021/apr/19/home-ownership-unaffordable-despite-95-mortgages-analysis-shows>
30. Future of London. (2019, November) Foundations for Community-Led Housing.
<https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/?download=24495>
31. Community Transport Association. (2017, November). The Future of Demand Responsive Transport.
<https://cta.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/The-Future-of-Demand-Responsive-Transport-1.pdf>
32. Future of London. (2021) Building recovery: closing the gap insights report.
<https://www.futureoflondon.org.uk/?download=30669>
33. Designing Buildings. (2021, March 24) Meanwhile use of buildings.
https://www.designingbuildings.co.uk/wiki/Meanwhile_use_of_buildings
34. The European Local Transport Information Service (Eltis). (2019, May 8) Modal Share.
<https://www.eltis.org/glossary/modal-share>
35. UK Green Building Council. (2021) Framework for Defining Social Value.
<https://www.ukgbc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Framework-for-Defining-Social-Value.pdf>
36. Van den Nouwelant, R., & Randolph, B. (2016, October) Mixed-tenure development: Literature review on the impact of differing degrees of integration. City Future Research Centre.
<https://cityfutures.be.unsw.edu.au/documents/463/Mixed-communities-for-FPA-Final.pdf>



MORE ON FUTURE OF LONDON'S WORK

Knowledge

Focusing on current and emerging issues, FoL produces practical guidance to help urban practitioners navigate the complexity of cities. Our extensive networks are integral to this, contributing knowledge and experience through events and case studies.

Networks

FoL networks connect people across different disciplines, sectors and backgrounds. We build and facilitate networks for our members, alumni and mentors as well as across thematic strands, such as housing, to enable people to share common challenges, showcase projects and learn from one another.

Leadership

FoL's acclaimed leadership courses provide promising urban professionals with an opportunity to share best practice, gain confidence, learn how to manage teams and relationships, develop innovative thinking and build networks with colleagues from the public, private and third sectors.

Services

Drawing on its successful track record and cross-sector connections, FoL delivers outcome-focused research, facilitation and convening for clients from the public, private and third sectors who appreciate the importance of working with a trusted and independent partner.

“If it wasn't for Future of London I would have left planning long ago... thank you for building an organisation that is so supportive, inclusive and relevant.”

– Karen Montgomerie, Planning Policy Manager, RB Greenwich



Future of London helps build better cities through knowledge, networks and leadership – across disciplines, organisations and sectors. We are the capital's independent network for regeneration, housing, infrastructure and economic development practitioners, with 5,000+ professionals using FoL as a hub for sector intelligence, connection and professional development, and a mandate to prepare the next wave of cross-sector city leaders.

Future of London
70 Cowcross Street
London EC1M 6EJ

futureoflondon.org.uk 

@futureofldn 

Future of London 