

## **Residential Development Advisory Board Notes – 10<sup>th</sup> April**

### **Attendees**

- Chair: Robert Grundy, head of housing, Savills
- Elaine Bailey, chief executive, The Hyde Group
- Claire Bennie, director, Municipal
- Chris Bowen, development director, Torus
- Tracey Coleman, director of planning and regeneration, Guildford Borough Council
- Richard Cook, group development director, Clarion Housing Group
- Clare Crawford, business development and investment director, Galliford Try
- Jacqueline Esimaje-Heath, land, acquisitions and planning director, L&Q
- Victoria Hills, chief executive, Royal Town Planning Institute
- Kate Ives, development director, Wates
- Rob Lamond, strategic delivery advisor, West Midlands Combined Authority
- Jason Margrave, head of development, Quintain
- Paul Morgan, general manager land, Homes England
- Cllr Adele Morris, deputy chair of the LGA's Environment, Economy, Housing and Transport Board
- Jane Owen, stakeholder engagement and market intel – housing strategy, MHCLG
- Julia Park, head of housing research, Levitt Bernstein
- Manisha Patel, senior partner, PRP
- Kaye Stout, partner, Pollard Thomas Edwards
- Graham Thomas, head of planning and development, Essex County Council
- Andrew Whitaker, planning director, Homes Builders Federation
- Piers Williamson, chief executive, The Housing Finance Corporation

## Discussion topics

### Skills

- Construction skills:
  - How do we change the image of the construction sector to make it more attractive? What is the role of the media in supporting this?
  - How do we engage the education sector (from primary schools right through to universities) and position construction as an aspirational career option?
  - How do we diversify the market and work with more SME housebuilders? How can we better support SME housebuilders?
  - How do we improve the diversity of the construction workforce and support more agile ways of working? How do we change culture?
- Local authorities resourcing (see Planning section below)
- Housing associations:
  - How can housing associations attract and develop skills in land-led development?
  - How can we make social housing an attractive sector to work in? (e.g. the social purpose message)

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*“Planning is about placemaking. It’s not just about processing applications.”*

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### Planning

- It’s worse than a skills gap. How can we make the case for more funding? How many more homes could we build if we invested in resourcing?
- How do we ensure we have the depth and breadth of skills for enabling placemaking on big strategic sites?
- Future of London fund for upskilling councils e.g. project management, governance
- How do we retain skilled workers and prevent them from leaving for the private sector?
- Are we seeing a restructuring of the sector?
- Is agile working and sharing skills an answer? How can we better combine and merge skills across authorities?
- What is the case to bring back Chief Planning Officers?
- Are we using the apprenticeship levy effectively?
- What is the role of digitisation in streamlining the planning process?
- How can we overcome the barriers to getting Local Plans adopted?

## Quality

- Addressing quality as a systemic problem
- What is the role of political leadership?
- Who is the custodian of quality? Is it one person's responsibility or everybody's?
- How can we commission housing that is still loved in 100 years?
- Will Hackitt's 'golden thread' of quality help?
- Should we bring back the Clerk of Works?
- MHCLG has a head of architecture but where are the local design champions?
- How do you frontload quality at the design stage?
- Are local design guides an answer?
- Do design panels achieve the right outcomes? How can you get quality engagement between councils and their communities and communicate what they really want?
- How can local authorities engage and collaborate early enough with developers?
- How can we incentivise developers? Should we have a top 10 on quality not volume?
- How can we remove the barriers for planning departments to refuse plans that are poor quality?

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*“We need to encourage housebuilders with carrots, not sticks!”*

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## Procurement

- Should we be commissioning not procuring? What is the difference?
- What are the barriers to commissioning well? What is the role of governance and culture?
- Do we need to redefine Value for Money? Are we doing whole life costing right?
- How do we win the battle against value engineering?
- What frameworks are working? E.g. Single Commissioning Framework – West Midlands Combined Authority

## Land supply

- How can we ensure land supply in the medium and long term?
- How can we acquire the skills to do more land-led development?
- How to unlock dormant sites

## **Placemaking**

- What makes a great place?
- How do you create places and communities where people want to live, work and play?
- How do you make placemaking viable? How do you build the case for investment?
- How do you win hearts and minds without stalling projects? Is the ballot process working?
- How do you measure success?
- What is the role of health and wellbeing in placemaking?

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*“We are partnering to share risk, share reward  
and share skills”*

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## **Partnerships**

- What are the different partnership models available and with whom?
- How can housing associations collaborate not compete with each other?
- How can we get better at communicating what we really want out of partnerships?

## **Viability**

- How can we increase affordable provision without damaging viability?
- What is affordable rent?

## **Ageing population and intergenerational communities**

- What do older people really want from housing and their communities?
- How do we make downsizing a positive choice?
- How do we remove the barriers to downsizing, such as stamp duty?
- Co-living scheme in Barnet as one successful example

## **MMC**

- How can it be more widely adopted across sector?
- How can we achieve the scale and volume needed?
- How can we ensure quality?
- How is technology innovating the manufacturing process?

## Urban placemaking and densification

- Does high density have to mean high rise?
- Densification to enable urban growth – how can we do it well?
- How to manage difficult conversations with residents about estate renewal
- What are the opportunities for building on industrial sites? How can convert them into places where people want to live?

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*“Councils are ready and willing to take on the challenge. We need more opportunity in the placemaking world”*

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## New towns

- Taking a strategic approach and collaborating with local and national partners
- Speaker from National Infrastructure Commission or Infrastructure Projects Authority

## Social value

- What do we really mean by social value?
- How do we measure it?
- Include examples such as investing in helping people back to work

## Build to Rent

- Will the government support or hinder BTR? (e.g. rent controls, stamp duty)
- How to attract institutional investment

## Diversification of tenure

- Do we need a broader set of tenures to solve the housing crisis?
- How can we do mixed tenure well?

## Disruptors

- What is the role of disruptors like Airbnb? E.g. on the temporary housing market?

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*“The conference needs to be challenging. We should make people uncomfortable”*

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### **Speakers suggestions**

- George Clarke, Mobie on how to attract kids into engineering and construction careers
- Jason Margrave on Wembley development as an example of place creation
- Paul Morgan on unlocking the Burgess Hill site
- Peter Dawson, urban designer on the Essex design guide
- Future of London on training and skills
- Andrew Whitaker on skills, training and the image of housebuilders
- MHCLG – let’s hold government to account. What is happening with the Green Paper and White Paper? What about the Raynsford Review of Planning 2020? Letwin Review?
- West Midlands Combined Authority on Single Commissioning Framework and inclusive growth agenda, preventative public health spending
- Adele Morris on Southwark’s approach to planning (“everything starts with planning”) encompassing social regeneration and public health, changing the way departments work together
- Truro, Cornwall placeshaping example
- Are we seeing a restructuring of planning? Controversial views from far right think tank – Victoria Hills to advise?

### **Notes on audience:**

- Invite private housing associations, PRS, more local authorities
- Niche mortgage lenders
- Self-build community
- Invite younger people in the industry – we need to develop our talent!

*Thank you to the advisory board for their fantastic contributions to the discussion. If you have any more topic or speaker suggestions, please email [julie.williams@oceanmedia.co.uk](mailto:julie.williams@oceanmedia.co.uk).*

*Please put HOMES UK in your diaries! It is taking place on 27-28 November 2019 at ExCeL, London. Visit [www.homesevent.co.uk](http://www.homesevent.co.uk) to register your free\* pass and stay up-to-date with the speakers and programme!*

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