



GARDEN CITIES: A THREAT TO RURAL COMMUNITIES & COUNTRYSIDE

TIME TO LOOK FORWARD, NOT BACKWARDS.

We, the undersigned organisations, urge the government to resist calls by the TCPA and others to reinstate Garden City Principles in the NPPF.

The garden city ideal was dreamed up by Ebenezer Howard nearly 120 years ago. But his real genius was not the garden city idea – that just spawned a century of sprawl. It was his belief that developments should be planned to create beautiful, functional communities.

But should an Edwardian dream spawn a modern nightmare? Communities facing garden city proposals know that the reality is just huge housing estates, creating more problems than they solve. Garden cities:

- are land-hungry, unpopular and often in unsustainable, isolated locations;
- risk becoming car-dependent commuter dormitories;
- do nothing to increase the supply of truly affordable housing;
- are not viable without significant local authority borrowing and government subsidy.

We believe the Government should instead look forward. In 2018 we face a different, although equally acute, set of problems to those of the original garden cities. Ebenezer Howard's real ability was to find a new answer to a seemingly intractable set of problems. We should be following his method, not adopting his now out-of-date idea.

If there really is a "housing crisis" we believe it lies in providing the types of homes England needs without destroying our environment and our countryside. We need to provide beautiful, well-connected places, with affordable homes, a range of employment opportunities and community support.

“These major works envisaged to smother the countryside seem to be scrappy, hurried and unskilled. They will come to haunt us if they go ahead.” Griff Rhys Jones, President, Civic Voice¹

¹ In his foreword to http://www.smartgrowthuk.org/resources/downloads/Garden_Communities_Report.pdf



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