Community Development and Place-making:

A Best Practice Model

July 2017

Contents

Summary

1. In 2015, Cherwell District Council commissioned Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) to research a community development approach which could help 'create self-sustaining socially active communities, where residents participate in a range of social and recreational activities at neighbourhood facilities, but also have a positive sense of belonging to the wider community.'

2. Subsequently, in 2016, CFO was commissioned by South and Vale District Councils and Sovereign Housing Association to set out best practice recommendations for building vibrant, sustainable communities on major new housing developments.

3. This report summarises the findings of these two research studies. Both studies (1) researched best practice in place-making and community development and (2) tested its conclusions with a wide range of stakeholders (residents, town, parish and district councillors, Local Authority officers and VCSE organisations).

4. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to building thriving, socially cohesive and self-sustaining communities. Different locations will have different development pressures and challenges.

5. However, CFO believes that a place-making approach based on the principles and recommendations set out below offers the best chance for new communities to flourish. These recommendations are underpinned by evidence and supported by those we have consulted. They build on the good practice already underway in Oxfordshire. At their heart, they aim to engage communities as fully as possible in the planning and development of new neighbourhoods.

We have developed a six-step approach, reflected in Figure 1.

Figure 1 – Placemaking on New Developments

Place-making: Developing a Best Practice Model

6. An extensive desk-top study was conducted as part of CFO's research. Evidence from some 30 sources was reviewed (see Appendix 1). Our intent was to outline, at a glance, the main findings and identify any significant agreement or disagreement concerning best practice in community development and place-making.

7. We reviewed a range of community development models and reports. These included:

    - Neighbourhood Management (UK government, many local authorities and RSLs);
    - Design for Social Sustainability (Future Communities);
    - Social Sustainability and New Communities (Social Life);
    - Social Infrastructure Needs of New Communities (Bedfordshire and Luton VCS);
    - Community Mobilisers (Community Action Milton Keynes);
    - C2 Model for Community Change (University of Birmingham); and
    - Community Infrastructure in New Residential Developments (Joseph Rowntree Foundation).

8. We also reviewed how community development approaches were taken forward in a variety of spatial contexts. These included:

    - Established social housing estates (Joseph Rowntree Foundation);
    - New Towns (Department of Communities and Local Government);
    - Master-planning on large new developments (the Scottish Government, Harlow District Council, the Commission on Architecture and the Built Environment);
    - Garden Cities (the Town and County Planning Association); and
    - New strategic development locations (Wokingham Borough Council).

9. These case studies were a useful source of information and insight into themes such as capacity-building, social cohesion, the role of design and community control of assets. We have referred to these sources throughout the report and incorporated key themes from the research into a model that sets out three broad place-making phases (see Table 1 below).

Table 1- Best practice in place-making: summary of key themes

PLANNING A NEW COMMUNITY	BUILDING A NEW COMMUNITY	SUSTAINING A NEW COMMUNITY
← **Community at the centre of the place-making vision and process** →		
Community involvement in master-planning: • **Design and layout** • **Transport and connectivity** • **Facilities: type, location and management** • **Location of community hubs** • **History and heritage** • **Governance structures** • **Forward funding**	**Community dialogue with developer/ agencies:** • **Indoor community space/ building** • **Community development support** • **Links with adjoining communities and sharing facilities** • **Community management of assets and facilities** • **Seed funding for new groups and activities** • **Training for community volunteers** • **VCS support**	**Community dialogue with developer/ agencies:** • Development management • Development expansion **Continuing advice and support for community halls and facilities** **Continuation of community development processes from earlier phases**
← **Local Authority supports the place-making vision and process** →		

10. It was important to test the premises of the indicative Best Practice model. To this end, a series of semi-structured interviews were undertaken. This is the most widely used interviewing format for qualitative research (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree, 2006).

11. Analysis of qualitative data should reflect the complexity, detail and content of the data and identify emergent categories and theories from the data rather than imposing a priori categories and ideas (Ritchie and Lewis, 2005: 4). Thus, interview questions were derived from the Best Practice in Place-making model suggested by the literature review and allowed the extraction of relevant and required data, while the semi-structured format gave space for new themes to emerge from the conversation.

12. 41 stakeholder interviews were undertaken, drawn from the following sources:

    a. Oxfordshire parish and town councils
    b. Oxfordshire Local Authority councillors
    c. Oxfordshire Local Authority officers
    d. Non-Oxfordshire Local Authority officers
    e. Oxfordshire VCSE sector (including church groups, residents associations, community land trusts)
    f. Oxfordshire-based Housing Association officers
    g. Non-Oxfordshire-based Housing Association officers

13. This wide-range of stakeholders allowed multiple perspectives to be explored with regard to effective place-making. Interviews with non-Oxfordshire Local Authority community development and planning officers and housing association officers allowed best practice lessons to be drawn and comparisons made with other areas experiencing similar levels of housing growth.

14. Another research methodology utilised was community surveys. Given the research intent to make recommendations for a community development approach that could be applied to future developments, it was felt crucial to explore the experience and opinions both of residents in existing communities and newer, still emerging developments.

15. Again using *Best Practice in Place-making* as our base, CFO undertook a survey of residents on two new, large housing developments: Longford Park, Banbury and Kingsmere, Bicester. 50 survey responses were received. Using these surveys, we could explore community aspirations and requirements of embryonic new communities and identify which *Best Practice in Place-making* principles may already be being applied on these new developments.

16. A survey for residents of existing communities, asking identical questions to those for emerging communities (plus questions specific to the context of established communities) was also distributed to groups and residents in larger villages in Cherwell and Bicester and Banbury via town and parish councils and community groups. In total, 156 responses were received.

17. The results gave an illuminating overview of what residents believe is important to achieving community cohesion and thriving communities. They were also useful in indicating the changes that existing communities would make in order to improve community facilities and widen the provision of groups and activities. These findings contributed to our recommendations regarding effective place-making.

18. Finally, we also undertook a survey of councillors in the Cherwell district. Councillors play a vital role in communities, articulating the concerns of residents and acting as community leaders. They are uniquely placed to offer insights as to the ways and means to improve community cohesion in a given place and have often witnessed many changes over time, further developing and nuancing their perspective. As such, they were important individuals to from whom to seek opinions. A total of 21 responses were received.

Place-making: Six Steps to Success

Introduction

19. Above, we have set out a best practice model for placemaking and community development. We will now draw on that model, the sources which informed it and the views of interviewees and survey respondents. We believe there are six steps to successful place-making:

> Step 1 - Involve the community in the development process
> Step 2 - Get the design right
> Step 3 – Provide indoor community meeting spaces
> Step 4 - Invest early in community development support
> Step 5 - Build and release capacity: VCS support, training and funding
> Step 6 - Support community management of assets and facilities

STEP 1- Involve the community in master-planning

20. The literature is clear that community involvement in master-planning is a key to success.

> *'[Master-planning] can range from strategic planning at a regional scale to small scale groups of buildings. Most commonly, it is a plan that describes and maps an overall development concept, including present and future land use, urban design, and landscaping, built form, infrastructure, circulation and service provision. It is based upon an understanding of place and it is intended to provide a structured approach to creating a clear and consistent framework for development'* (Scottish Government, 2008).

21. In order to be 'based upon an understanding of place', master-planning needs to put community development principles at its heart. The Town and Country Planning Association (2012) argue that, '*master-planning should be inclusive, participative and representative…If engagement is to be meaningful, it must begin before the first master-plan is created, to ensure that local views are taken into account.*' It is an opinion shared by government: '*local planning authorities should create a shared vision with communities of the residential environment and facilities they wish to see*' (*National Planning Policy Framework*, 2012).

22. Where possible, '*the conversation between people who will live in the new settlements and those involved in building them should start well before the first brick is laid'* (Future Communities, 2015). Often the local authority knows who some of the new residents will be, particularly when they are social housing tenants and self-builders. Housing Associations can help with this. However, the creation of this shared vision should draw on groups, individuals and organisations living and operating in the locality of the new development (such as town and parish councils,

residents associations, local councillors and VCSE groups) '*to ensure that plans are informed by local people's knowledge, concerns and aspirations*' (TCPA, 2012).

23. In this way, community representatives can suggest what facilities should be built, where they should be located, ideas for the design of new housing and how it should connect to adjoining neighbourhoods. Engaging the community at this early stage makes it more likely that the physical design and layout of the new development will support community interaction and engagement.

Community involvement in the planning of new developments – study findings

24. Given that an influencing role can only happen if communities feel they have a place at the 'master-planning table', it is important to establish in this is happening effectively in the context of our studies.

'The parish council needs to be in on the discussion.'

25. Almost every parish and town council interviewed expressed varying levels of discontent with the level of consultation on new developments. In both urban and rural contexts, communities felt strongly that they were not being listened to and that development was being 'imposed' with little or no consultation. That said, communities were aware of how the situation had been exacerbated as a result of contraction of officer resources, the presumption in favour of sustainable development in the government's National Planning Policy Framework, the lack of a 5-year land supply and the absence of an up to date Local Plan, with the recent planning context being viewed as somewhat of a development 'free for all'.

'*Some of the new developments are not the most welcoming of places.*'

26. A respondent noted: '*people are worried about change and there seems to be resignation* [about new housing development] *but also a feeling of the need to make the most of them.*' While recognising the pressures noted above, almost every parish council interviewed felt that much more effort should be made to ensure that new developments are in keeping with the existing built environment and offer maximum benefits to the community via S106 or CIL contributions. A Development Management officer also commented that '*engagement in the planning process is essential for local communities to maximise the opportunities presented by developments*.'

27. Yet many communities were frustrated that this was not happening. On occasions, community facilities were built in the wrong place; there was poor connectivity between new and existing development; building materials were not in keeping with the locality; and the parish council not consulted about projects that might benefit from developer contribution. Several communities were also critical of the construction process. They mentioned, for example, that developers had reneged on agreements not to use certain site access points; that they had spoiled adjoining amenities; and had cleared vegetation without permission. Given that these problems continued even after complaints to the Local Authority, there was a sense that planning enforcement was weak or inadequate.

'*There needs to be joined-up thinking.*'

28. This is not to be overly critical of Local Authorities. From officer and member discussion it is clear that some community criticisms in a given place were overstated or misplaced. This was particularly apparent with regard to the S106 developer contribution process. While officers are familiar with the process, communities are clearly not, which can lead to misconceptions about how monies are being allocated.

29. Nonetheless, there does seem to have been a communication breakdown between the Local Authority and some local communities with regard to new housing development. Given the highly emotive nature of this issue, the pressures on Local Authority resources and the recent planning context, there is a premium on quickly (re)establishing effective communication. At the moment, the general perception from communities is that they are not being effectively involved in discussions about future growth.

30. As we have seen, best practice in master-planning is clear that '*community engagement is required from the outset, and needs to be sustained throughout* (Taylor, 2011)' and should '*promote community participation in decisions on the nature of the settlement, how it is developed and implemented*' (Matrix Partnership, 2005). As a town council interviewee stated: '*it is very important to involve community in discussions at an earlier stage.*'

31. One way of encouraging community involvement on new development would be to establish Site Development Forums (SDFs). Parish and Town Councils were universally in favour of this innovation. As one parish council stated:

> '*This [the SDF] is an interesting and welcome concept, and if agreed the Parish Council would value involvement in pre-application discussions, it needs to be made clear to all parties that it is not just a "seat at the table" but to have a voice.*'

32. Each SDF might include the parish or town council, local councillors, a Community Development Worker, development management, landscape and housing officers, County Council highways, and the developer. Other relevant stakeholders could be included as deemed useful (e.g. VCSE representatives). The SDF would oversee all aspects of the new development, trouble-shooting issues as they arise, from initial discussions to site completion. As one interviewee argued: '*having all stakeholders meet but with a mandate and willingness to consider the implications of their plans would be very valuable.*'

33. The issue of SDF credibility and mandate is very important. The Local Authority must ensure that there is strength to an SDF and that it acts as an 'enforcer' when required, ensuring, for example, that S106 timetables and planning conditions are being kept to by the developer. Again, this role could be undertaken by Development Management. An assessment needs to be made as to whether it would be reasonable and expedient to pursue formal enforcement action. In addition, SDF's could also be 'sponsored' by a Director to help resolve significant problems.

34. A key SDF issue is the 'trigger threshold'. Several parish councils also expressed the opinion that 10 new homes would be their preferred threshold, with one suggesting a higher number (25).

35. In urban areas, Town Council responses suggest the SDF trigger should be in the range of 15-25 homes or *'any development on strategic sites [or] development where a facility or provision is likely to come our way*.' By way of justification, another respondent noted that a development of 20 upwards *'has a significant impact on the surrounding areas and the existing infrastructure, is a sizable community in its own right and has significant public realm management issues etc.'*

36. However, for example, in Cherwell District in 2014-15 there were 98 development proposals of 20+ units in urban areas and 10+ units in Category A villages in 2014-15. Therefore, it is very difficult to imagine a context in which such a large number of SDFs could be adequately resourced or managed.

37. As a result, the SDF approach is best suited to the strategic development context. By participating in an SDF on a strategic site, the community would:

   - bring an awareness of local knowledge, history and heritage
   - allow for community input into section 106 discussions
   - ensure the best siting of any required community facilities
   - discuss management options for community facilities
   - allow community input into design of the new development consider how to develop links with adjacent neighbourhoods and the town/village

38. This is not to say that improved methods of community involvement in development discussions should not be recommended for non-strategic sites. It would, however, would have to be bespoke rather a 'model', SDF-type approach. In these contexts, Development Management might undertake initial discussions with developers, establish development principles, maintain confidentiality etc. and inviting the community to the discussion table at the appropriate time.

39. However, communities would need to have confidence that the criticism outlined in this study regarding low levels of community influence in development discussion would be addressed by this bespoke approach. One means to do this could be for the Local Authority to set out a community engagement 'roadmap', explaining the what, why and when of how it intends to facilitate, monitor and manage the process of community involvement in development discussion. This 'roadmap', alongside the other community engagement and communication initiatives could go a long way to giving communities confidence that procedures have improved. Internal discussions would be required regarding resource implications and impact on timescale for delivery.

STEP 2 – Get the design right

What is high-quality design?

40. The desk-top study indicated that physical design should be underpinned by the following:

   - A sense of character

- Attractive and successful outdoor areas
- Accessibility to green spaces and range of recreational spaces
- Ease of movement- a place that is easy to reach and move through
- Quality walking, cycling and public transport facilities
- Buildings and public space accessible to those with disabilities
- Flexible buildings and open spaces that can accommodate shifts in user requirements
- Design that is distinctive, easily understood and 'navigable'
- A mix of uses that help people to live, work and play in the same area
- Design development to reduce crime and fear of crime
- Walking distance communities
- Flexible infrastructure/ meeting spaces to incorporate future demographic change

Why is high-quality design important?

41. Future Communities note that:

    '*Work carried out in 2001 identified both economic and social costs of bad design. These social costs include isolation and mental health issues caused by poor public transport networks, inability for people to access local job opportunities because of poor public transport connections, issues with housing tenure and management, and in particular, a growth in buy-to-let properties making it difficult to manage the profile of areas in the long term* (Future Communities, 2015).'

42. Elsewhere, in *Physical Capital: how great places boost public value*, the Commission for the Built Environment (2005) argues that:

    '*the public health agenda can be underpinned by public space which is well-designed, well-maintained and well-managed, encouraging lifestyle activity to address obesity… and reducing the incidence of mental health problems; crime, and the fear of crime, can similarly be reduced through high-quality public space and improved design of buildings, such as houses and shops… [and] civic and community renewal can be facilitated through improved social interactions in safe and attractive spaces and settlements with an enhanced ''sense of place''*.'

Achieving high-quality design – study findings

43. Some communities feel that high quality design (and an awareness of the best way to achieve it) has been lacking. As one Parish Council stated: *'they need to look at location, good design, connectivity and permeability between spaces.'* Another Parish Council noted: *'there has been some anecdotal evidence of anti-social behaviour issues due to the design of the new estate, with confrontations over parking and the use of recreation equipment where the police have had to be called'.* The PC was also critical of the development's physical orientation, which reduced connectivity with

the village, with negative implications for community cohesion. The Parish Council said it was not consulted about this development.

44. Other Town and Parish Council interviewees were critical of the 'off the peg' design of new houses, with little thought given to individuality. This contributed to the sense that development was 'being done' to the community, with only lip service being paid to the local context in which homes are being built.

Key elements in the design and location of new community indoor space

Community Involvement

45. The Commission for the Built Environment (2008) notes: *'a [design] vision is likely to derive from an understanding of the characteristics of a site, its history and geography, to suggest how a sense of place can be created and related to what is there already.'* Future Communities (2015) stress that in order '*to ensure that future communities are successful, practitioners need to find the right recipe for local collaboration across sectors; involving residents in decision-making and long-term stewardship of new settlements.*'

46. However, there is no one size fits all approach to achieving high quality physical design on new housing development. Every planning context, whether greenfield, brownfield, strategic, eco-town or new village estate is unique, from topography to infrastructure, transport connections to proximity to existing developments and neighbourhoods etc. Physical design (and application of the best practice criteria listed above) should be place-specific. Given that local residents are custodians of place, the community should be at the centre of development and design discussion.[1]

47. In *Designing and Running a community Building- Reflections from our Grant Holders*, the Big Lottery Fund emphasised the need to 'work with the community': '*communication must be regular, appropriate, engaging, two-way, and easy to access, to ensure the project is owned and valued by them [the community]. Communication should be continuous from the initial consultation through to the completion and the ongoing development and running of the centre* (Big Lottery, 2011).'

48. So how can best practice outcomes be achieved? Enquiry by Design (EbD) is an approach which has proved its effectiveness in multiple contexts. Community involvement is central to EbD, which:

> '*is applicable to any development, with the aim of ensuring that the end product is driven by good design principles. The process enables stakeholders to appreciate the context of the site, providing an understanding of how it functions and what the*

---

[1] Scottish Government, 2008; TCPA, 2012; Oxford Brookes, 2006; CABE, 2008; Future Communities, 2015.

consequences of its developments would be on the surrounding environment and the community' (Scottish Government, 2008).

Co-location of 'walking distance' community facilities

49. Many interviewees commented on the importance of co-locating community facilities to create a community hub. This can increase levels of community interaction and encourage co-operation between residents and shared use of buildings and public space. It may lead to shared governance arrangements. This may involve co-location of:

    - Under-5's provision   - Primary schools   -sports facilities
    - Community Halls   - Community shops

    Precisely where a community hub might be located will depend on site-specific circumstances and the nature and size of the development. Sometimes facilities may be located to encourage more interaction with adjacent neighbourhoods. Large neighbourhoods may require 2 or more hubs. But where possible, they should be within walking distance of the majority of residents.

Flexible spaces

50. In *Designing and Running a community Building- Reflections from our Grant Holders*, the Big Lottery Fund emphasised the importance of flexibility in design: '*keep the design as flexible as possible to allow for changing circumstances and trends. It is well recognised that trends in respect of community needs change. The design should allow for potential changes with little or no additional expenditure on capital build/ refurbishment* (Big Lottery, 2011).' Attention was also drawn to the need to ensure that enough storage capacity is built into the design.

Accessibility and Inclusivity

51. Oxfordshire is ageing rapidly. One in 4 children born today will live to 100. As the number of older people rises, it's important that as many as possible are able to remain active and able to contribute to their communities. New housing developments need to consider the implications of an ageing population. One approach – 'Lifetime Neighbourhoods'- is driven by two factors:

    - First, the increasing proportion of people who live into old age and whose independence can be limited by disability and isolation; and
    - Second, evidence that good design can support well- being and independent living for older people by addressing issues such as: transport, shops, social contact, community facilities, information and access to green space.

52. Age UK's *Pride of Place* report set out practical ways for taking these ideas forward. Master-planning should consider:

- designing common space to encourage people to meet and spend time with others
- ways of encouraging people of all ages to share facilities without conflict
- how to make journeys outside the home easier. Issues that matter include: toilets, seating, pavement repair, lighting, bus shelters, signage and traffic control
- involving citizens of all ages in designing and improving their communities
- ensuring low level anti-social behaviour and nuisance is dealt with effectively
- ensuring there is someone to call upon if something goes wrong
- intelligent and simple use of information technology in linking people and services

53. In *Shaping Neighbourhoods- Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment (2014)*, the Greater London Authority stresses the importance of making accessibility and inclusivity central to masterplanning:

> *'an accessible and inclusive environment can be achieved by requiring an inclusive approach from the outset. Development agreements, development briefs and procurement processes should be explicit about incorporating the access requirements of disabled and older people and, where appropriate, any particular access needs that women, children, or people from different faith groups may have when accessing and using the building or space.'*

STEP 3 – Provide a community meeting space

Why is a community meeting space important?

54. The early provision of a community building on a new development (where required) was strongly advocated in the literature, in interviews and in our residents surveys.[2]

> *'Drawing on a review of international experience, the Young Foundation suggest four factors that are essential to build new communities that will be successful and sustainable in the long term. These are: amenities and social infrastructure; social and cultural life; voice and influence; and space to grow… new communities need local services like schools, shops and public transport, at an early stage… – preferably before new residents move in'* (Woodcraft, 2011).

55. Several interviewees - including Gloucester City Council, Soha and Wokingham Borough Council- stated that it was important to provide a community building early on in a new development. The reasoning was in line with *Transferable Lessons from*

---

[2] Literature: e.g. Future Communities, 2015; Woodcraft, 2011; Oxford Brookes, 2006; Community Renewal. Interviews with local authorities, Housing Associations and VCSE organisations .

the New Towns (2006), where it was found that '*where these facilities were already in place when people began to arrive, the community came together and networks were formed more readily.*'

56. A community facility acts as a focal point for a new community. It is a vital part of the process of *'getting a new community off to a good start. It can help bring new and existing residents together and is far preferable to trying to turn round a poor reputation further down the line'* (Future Communities, 2015). Where facilities are not provided in a timely manner, new arrivals are more likely to keep to themselves and social isolation is more likely. With no place to meet, it is difficult for new residents to get to know each other and set up new groups to meet common needs. As a result, they may look off-site for those needs to be met.

57. On larger developments, the provision of a new facility such as community centre is usually written into S106 documentation. However, the 'trigger point' for constructing that building is often not reached until a certain number of houses have been built. Until monies from house sales have begun to flow, developers can argue that they do not have the revenue to allow them to be able to construct the new facility. Several interviewees also suggested other caveats:

   - *'if a new facility is provided at the very start of a new development how can you be sure it is fit for the needs and purpose of residents who have yet to move in?'*

   - *'how can that community facility be financially viable without the residents to sustain it? '*

How might community meeting spaces be provided earlier on a new development?

58. *Forward fund construction of a new community facility:*

   The current fiscal climate makes this problematic from both a developer and Local Authority perspective. As one interviewee involved in community infrastructure provision stated: '*it is hard to require front funding through S106 of any infrastructure as it will impact on the overall financial viability of developments. [In the past] English Partnerships frequently front-funded infrastructure to support new communities… but the days when the public sector has the resources to do this are gone and I can't see the private sector being able or willing to take on this role*.' Nevertheless, there remains mileage in at least exploring the possibility of front-funding community facilities on future development and recouping the monies from the developer when the S106 thresholds are reached.

59. There are, of course, financial risks associated with this process. The Local Authority might be left with a financial and physical 'white elephant' should a development, for example, not go ahead in the way that was planned.

60. *Provide a temporary facility at the outset of a new development:*

   Suggestions included using, for example, a Portakabin-type structure or a show home on the new development as a temporary community centre. This would involve low financial outlay from the funding agency. Future Communities (2015) have found

that these 'meanwhile spaces' work for new communities as they grow. Developer provision of a temporary facility could be negotiated as part of the S106 agreement. Discussion would be required with the developer (and site manager) regarding the siting of a facility to ensure the safety and comfort of users as development continues. However, a strong case could also be made for using a show home as a community hub. This hub could offer an additional selling point to interested purchasers by making clear that a community is emerging on the estate, there is somewhere to meet your new neighbours and activities to take part in- this isn't just a soulless construction site. This may make a house purchase more appealing to young families in particular.

61. A case could also be made to developers on the basis of reducing problems currently associated with development and making the build process more straightforward and less resource intensive. On one major development site in Cherwell, for example, for many months young people had no place to meet and no activities in which to get involved. This led to some anti-social behaviour and community safety (playing on construction sites) issues. A temporary facility to meet in, ideally combined with youth outreach work could have helped to nip these problems in the bud, by providing structured activity for young people and a place to safely socialise.

62. If the Local Authority is to fund a temporary facility then the financial outlay is more manageable. The temporary facility solution also solves the issue of designing and building a community centre before new residents have had an opportunity to shape it to their needs. While the estate continues to grow, the temporary facility can act as a 'consultation hub', shaping the design of the new centre which will be built when the S106 triggers are reached.

63. *Strengthen S106 agreements*

    A third option is to strengthen S106 agreements in order to achieve lower thresholds and trigger points for provision of facilities on new developments. There was a strong feeling amongst interviewees that developers have the upper hand in these negotiations. Indeed, even when contributions have been agreed, there are instances where time-tables for provision of facilities have slipped. The Local Authority has a responsibility to enforce agreements that are not honoured in a timely and efficient manner.

64. Developers are prepared to agree to lower contribution thresholds. Our research found, for example, that at Cholsey Meadows, South Oxfordshire, the new community pavilion was delivered after 100 homes had been completed. There is no reason to assume that developers could not be similarly persuaded elsewhere and should be presented with evidence for the value of doing so.

STEP 4 - Invest in early community development support

65. The evidence strongly endorses the value of having a community development worker available at an early stage in a new development to 'kick start' the process of bringing people together, developing new activities and putting in place the building blocks of a strong community. Interviews confirmed this view.[3]

66. *Design for Social Sustainability- a framework for creating thriving new communities* (2011), states that:

> *'Neighbourhood-based workers, whether they are volunteers, part of a parish council or neighbourhood management team can create opportunities and spaces for people to interact with neighbours through local events, street parties, public meetings, consultation and community planning work. These approaches are proven to be effective at engaging residents and helping to support strong social networks and working to break down barriers and reduce tensions between different social, faith or ethnic groups.'*

67. Milton Keynes, which uses a community development approach called Community Mobilisers, (discussed below) notes: *'it has been argued that the spark that inspired residents to come together, to speak to each other, and to collaborate on solving issues of mutual concern was ignited by their Community Mobiliser. Had there not been someone there to help make connections and stimulate community participation then it is doubtful that the examples of organised, resident-led initiatives that we observed… would have happened (Drake et al, 2014).'*

68. *Firm Foundations* (2004) makes the important observation that community development is a long-term commitment: *'take a long view- there are no quick fixes if change is to be long-lasting… Ensure that support is accessible at neighbourhood, parish or community level… [and] provide access to support provided by workers with community development skills.'*

69. The golden thread running through the National Planning Policy Framework is achieving sustainable development: '*the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development*' (NPPF para, 6). Para 7 goes on to set out the three dimensions to sustainable development (economic, social and environmental). With regard to the social role of sustainable development, the planning system should '*support strong, vibrant and healthy communities… and support its health, social and cultural well-*being' (NPPF, para 7).

70. Notwithstanding the need set out in NPPF para 173 to ensure '*viability and deliverability*' in the pursuit of sustainable development, the provision of CDW support could be a key contributor to the achieving the social function of sustainable development as set out on the NPPF. By facilitating this type of support the planning system could more effectively '*play an active role in guiding development to*

---

[3] Literature: e.g. Future Communities, 2015; Woodcraft, 2011; Oxford Brookes, 2006; Drake et al, 2014; TCPA, 2012; Firm Foundations, 2004; Bedfordshire and Luton Voluntary Services Council. Multiple interviews also supported the value of having a dedicated CDW.

sustainable solutions.' (NPPF, para 8). Social infrastructure (community development) support, provided via developer contributions represents appropriate, if not essential, support to ensure the sustainability of new communities: '*positive improvements… in people's quality of life*' is also a tenet of the NPPF (para 9).

What kind of community development support is wanted? – study findings

71. Multiple interviewees shared similar opinions regarding the role and value of a community development worker: a cross-section is given below.

CDW Function	Evidence
Bringing residents together	'Someone is needed to galvanise people, to act as a catalyst and go out and talk to people and generate interest in community activity' (Town Council interview). 'An outreach worker could welcome new people to the community and go round talking to them, getting them involved. Ideally, this would be a full-time worker for the village but we imagine [the role] would be better shared with other villages' (Parish Council interview). 'I would be quite passionate [about a CDW]. The longer it is left to start to link people up the harder it gets. When the community is at its smallest the value added is greatest' (VCSE interview). 'A CDW would be valuable, people need that point of contact-you can't just assume that people will come together, it has to be supported' (VCSE interview).
Building bridges with neighbouring communities	'[A CDW could] help build the bridges between new and existing communities' (Parish Council interview). 'There is value in the independence of [a CDW] here. He can turn up and chat with people and organisations in neighbouring communities and begin the conversation' (Gloucester City Council interview).
Managing community facilities	'[A CDW could] help run the community building and help with fundraising' (Parish Council interview). 'A CDW could help relieve the pressure from the small management team, help with volunteer recruitment and create links with the community' (VCSE interview).
Creating new and helping existing community groups	'The CDW had lots of success in setting things up on the new [Cholsey Meadows] development- book club, mother and toddler group, play days. The smaller things worked better and created the community glue' (Housing Association interview).

	'Local groups could be better supported with a Development worker through the Local Authority' (Town Council interview).
	'Community Builders [CDWs] have positive enquiry conversations with local people and get them to think about what they could do in their community, what they're good at' (Gloucester City Council' interview).
Liaising with agencies	'It would be helpful to have someone to liaise with the Local Authority on all sorts of questions on a regular basis' (Parish Council interview).
	'A CDW role could be strong, getting stakeholders in the development together, setting up the meetings and developing the community association, getting everyone to talk to each other, liaising with the developers and bringing in others to trouble-shoot issues' (Housing Association interview).
	'Someone needs to be in place before the development happens to bring everyone together [and start the community building process]' (Housing Association interview).
	'A paid community development worker is necessary on a big development and it is useful for this person to have very close links with the Local Authority and establish good communication between the council and the developer' (South and Vale DC interview).

What kind of community development support works elsewhere?

72. The table above summarises some of the key themes which should guide CDW work on a large new development. However, to what extent are they being applied within the various community development approaches to place-making which have been suggested via the literature review and research? Importantly, how successful have these models been?

73. In the tables below, we summarise 3 approaches to community development:

- Milton Keynes Community mobilisers
- Gloucester Community Builders
- Cholsey Development Trust

74. These three models have proved- in practice- to be highly effective in bringing new residents together, generating new activity, creating a community feel, and building links with existing communities. Their independence from the Local Authority or developer was seen as important in terms of building credibility with residents. At the same time, each had a close relationship with the Local Authority, which, in turn, was supportive of the community development approach.

75. However, this is not to say that a similar credibility cannot be achieved by having a community development worker directly employed by the Local Authority. The key, perhaps, lies in the skills and abilities of the CDW, and his or her ability to nurture positive relationships with a community while minimising any potentially negative implications or insinuations that might arise as a result of being a council employee (and potentially being a lightning rod for discontent, of whatever kind, with the council).

Model A

Milton Keynes Community Mobilisers
Overview
The overarching mission of the Community Mobiliser (CM) approach is to increase community participation and grass-roots led initiatives, to improve educational performance and social mobility, to reduce the need for external interventions and to improve levels of social organisation (Drake et al, 2014). CMs support people to have a voice in their community. They work with agencies and schools, enabling volunteers to play a role in decision making, signposting to training, and creating sustainable ways to contribute and enjoy life in the places they live (Community Action Milton Keynes, 2015).
Management and funding
CMs currently work across 5 areas in Milton Keynes. They are funded via S106 agreement and employed by Community Action Milton Keynes, an independent community development and CVS organisation.
Place-making approach
Five key elements underpin the CM approach: have a (temporary) community space available (a 'welcome base' for new residents); have a community worker in place to initiate development work; establish a steering group of agencies to take forward the arrivals programme. At the same time, start to develop a community forum to represent residents; consider a community grants budget to enable community groups to access seed funding; engage local training providers to allow residents to develop their skills.
Discussion and learning
Two evaluations of the CM service have been undertaken (Drake et al, 2014). CM was found to be successful with regard to the following: **supporting and facilitating community activity; promoting community cohesion; and working as a liaison between residents**. The success was attributed to three main factors: 1- the **patient and gradual method** of the mobiliser approach and its non-directive style; 2- a **commitment to openness** that incorporates being non-judgemental; and 3- **effective support systems for the CMs** as community development workers. A USP of the CM approach is that it 'gets statutory services to the places they can't normally reach- the **local intelligence provided via the CMs is vital**' (Community Action MK interview).This also allows issues to be dealt with as they arise, avoiding a problem growing

until the situation is more fraught its solution becomes more resource-intensive, thereby improving community-LA relationships.

A point was also made that **measuring the impact** of a service such as CM must be considered at the start (Milton Keynes City Council interview). The CM service used the Theory of Change Approach designed by New Philanthropy Capital to 'create a sound framework', which uses methodologies such as dialogue action logs, resident-led evaluation questionnaires and well-being surveys to measure outcomes and indicators.

Model B

Gloucester Community Builders (Asset-based Community Development)
Overview
The role of the Community builder is to introduce the approach of Asset Based Community Development, in order that individuals are heard, and the community itself has the opportunity to reach its full potential and grow into the kind of community that residents want (GL Communities, 2015).
Management and funding
Community Builders are funded by multi-agency monies (separate to developer S106 agreements). They are employed by an independent community development charity- GL Communities.
Place-making approach
CB uses the Asset Based Community Development approach: 'The term 'asset-based' is increasingly being used by those working in community development to emphasise building on the positive social aspects of a community without overly focusing on negative aspects. Assets in this regard refer not only to physical assets such as land and buildings but to the wealth of knowledge, skills, experience and social networks that can help address the priorities and needs of the community (Scottish Community Development Centre, 2011).
Discussion and learning
The CB model is very highly regarded by Gloucester City Council (interview). The CB on the Kingsway estate in the city has proven to be very successful with regard to **building community identity** on a new estate, **building bridges with the adjoining community** (which was hostile to the new estate), and **building social infrastructure and social cohesion**. '[The CB] has helped people to develop an identity and draw out the local heritage[and] connected people and groups are starting to form, sports and hobby clubs and a dementia café- there is much more of a community feel now.'
A key element underpinning these successes is **independence**. The CB is accountable to a panel of residents and not viewed as 'the council'. This ensures that the CB does not act as a lightning rod for all the multiple issues that residents may have with the local authority. Yet the **support of both community and Local Authority** for the CB approach allows the CB to act as an 'effective ''inbetweener'', the community's resource to do with what they want but able to draw in council services as resident's might need them.'
To date, there has **not been an independent analysis of the CB model**. However, Gloucester City Council is about to undertake an impact assessment of the value of the community activity generated as a result of CB initiatives. Nevertheless, the council is **supportive of the**

ABCD theory and impressed by its practice: 'one way to see the impact is to put people in a room and let them discuss how the Community Builder has **contributed to community cohesion** and the feel of the community- the stories and clubs and connections that are happening are the measures [of success].'

Model C

Cholsey Development Trust Community Development Worker
Overview
The Cholsey Meadows development was commissioned by the Homes and Communities Agency who owned the land. It was an exemplar development with high quality homes and a strong emphasis on community facilities and building community cohesion. A community development worker was in place from very early in the build to help the new community to develop strong connections and integrate well with the existing village. To achieve this, a Community Trust was set up.
Management and funding
One paid (funded by the developer), part-time (0.8FTE) community worker employed by the Cholsey Development Trust (CDT) and managed by Soha Housing Association.
Place-making approach
Facilitate the creation of a strong and vibrant community; encourage a low carbon and green lifestyle amongst residents; own, maintain and manage the community land and buildings.
Discussion and learning
Although the ethos of the CDT was not underpinned by a 'formal' model like the Community Mobiliser or Community Builder approaches, the intent of the role was very similar and similarly successful. The community development worker (CDW) did a lot to **build bridges with existing community** and it was strongly argued that this would not have happened without this specific role to drive the process. Likewise, the CDW was successful in **facilitating new community activity,** such as a book club, mother and toddlers group, and play days. Key to this process was **early engagement**, the CDW was on site right from the start to welcome residents and start the community building process.

There was a strong sense that community development **support needs to be in place early** on a new development- community activity can't be relied on to 'just happen' but needs to be encouraged. This would appear to be borne out by the fact that since the CDW role has been lost at Cholsey Meadows 'community activity has been ad hoc- what is happening is a **legacy of the early CDW activity**.' The experience on another large new development site in South Oxfordshire, where there is no CDW and very little community activity taking place was also given as evidence to support the contention.

One weakness noted in the Cholsey approach was the CDWs **lack of 'influencing power'**. It was felt that the role could be strengthened, 'getting stakeholders in the development together, setting up the meetings and developing the community association, getting everyone to talk to each other, liaising with the developers and bringing in others to trouble-shoot issues.' |

76. Again, however, there is no one-size fits all regarding CDW support: '*the value of* a *CDW is dependent on the needs and size of the development* [non-Cherwell LA interview].' In Cherwell District, for example, CDW support is already built into S106 agreements on several large developments. This would appear to be the most effective mechanism for securing community development support on large, future developments. The main issue here, as with the provision of community buildings, is sequencing: when does the support kick in?

77. Best practice and community evidence suggests it should be there from the very start. Yet developers could resist upfront funding for the same reasons as for community buildings (although the outlay would be much less). If so, some kind of 'forward funding' might offer the best solution.

78. Nevertheless, is recognised that, as set out in NPPF para 173, '*viability and deliverability*' must be considered in the pursuit of sustainable development. Therefore, account must be taken of the differing challenges posed by developments of different sizes, with CDW support tailored to these different contexts whilst being guided by a best practice approach. On developments of less than 100 it is felt unlikely that S106 or CIL developer contributions towards a CDW would meet the three 'planning obligations tests'.

79. In addition, CDW support can only be effective once a viable cohort of residents has moved on site. Until these thresholds have been reached, there may be scope within Local Authority community development or services departments to provide some level of support for new residents, supported by the VCSE sector.

80. Likewise, there should be flexibility with regard to the extent and duration of CDW support, based on particular development contexts. The case studies considered above suggest a 0.8 to 1 FTE equivalent per 1000 new homes:

   - In Cholsey, the CDW was a 0.8FTE working on a development of c. 800 new homes
   - In Milton Keynes, Community Builders work at a ratio one FTE per 1000 homes
   - In Kingsway, Gloucester a Community Builder now covers an estate with 3000 homes. It was felt by the interviewee that one FTE CDW per 1000 homes would be offer a more effective (in terms of positive community outcomes), 'best practice' ratio.

81. Taken as a whole, a balance needs to be drawn between the community development needs of a given-sized community, viability and deliverability and available resources. The table below offers an indicative model:

Table 2 – Indicative extent and duration of CDW support on different-sized development sites

Size of development	Length of CDW support	Trigger threshold for CDW in place (number of new homes built/ residents[4])
Less than 100	No dedicated CDW	
100-250	1 year (0.4FTE)	30 (75)
250-500	1 year (0.4FTE)	30 (75)
500-1000	2 years (0.8FTE)	50 (125)
1000+	2.5 years (0.8FTE)	100 (250)

STEP 5 – Build capacity: voluntary and community sector support

82. The Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector can play an important role in helping to create successful new places.[5] Across Oxfordshire, this already happens in an ad hoc way and there is scope to engage the VCSE more systematically. This might involve district VCSE organisations supplying community development workers, offering advice and support on recruiting volunteers and building new community organisations. In so doing, they would be complementing what the local authorities and RSLs are able to offer. This is why it makes sense to involve the sector at an early stage in the planning of new developments. *Transferable Lessons from the New Towns* (2006) suggests new communities should have:

> *'access to community support and social capital building. This can include community development workers; a 'community chest' for funding small requiring scale community projects; working with the community and voluntary sector; working with church and faith groups.'*

83. Communities contacted for CFO's research generally shared the view that VCSE support would be welcome, especially with regard to governance and volunteering. Indeed, town and parish council interviews noted that while there were many community groups, there was an issue with the pipeline of volunteers coming forward to run them: *'activities need individuals prepared to commit time and often rely on one or two people'; 'voluntary capacity to run groups is fairly impressive but*

---

[4] Assumes 2.5 residents per home
[5] Including Drake et al, 2014; Ipsos-MORI, 2007; Oxford Brookes, 2006; Community Renewal.

never enough'; and 'the issue is sustaining volunteering over time, hanging onto people.'

84. This last comment was shared by community associations on established housing developments in urban areas. Here, interviewees described a process of initial community interest and volunteering in the early days of the new community association with a gradual fall-off in volunteer numbers (and enthusiasm) as time passed, particularly as children grew up and parents went back to work. With fewer volunteers, community associations tend to focus on the most complicated task under their remit, which is managing their community centre. This means that wider remit of a community association (developing volunteering strategies, running community outreach activities etc.) tend to fall away over time, usually after two or three years.

85. This issue of community association capacity and support needs to be addressed if emerging and new developments are to avoid a similar contraction in activity. In the early days, a good support network could better sustain the activities of nascent community associations, while offering support to emerging community groups, encouraging and supporting their formation and offering on-going advice (managing volunteers, writing business plans, fundraising etc.) as they become more established.

86. To this end, parish authorities and the VCSE sector have a key role to play. There is a strong network of VCSE organisations to draw on across Oxfordshire and study interviews made clear that they are keen to become more involved in place-making on new communities (and also help support more established communities).

87. It is important that this support is available from the very early days:

> *'A wide range of evidence has identified…the fragile nature of new communities. It takes time for (them) to develop a sense of local identity and for strong social networks to flourish. Lessons from new settlements in the UK over the past 50 years have concluded that a lack of social infrastructure to support new residents when they arrive slows the process of building a locality-based community and can create long-term problems for the social and economic wellbeing and opportunities of new arrivals' (Future Communities, 2015).*

88. In Step 4, we emphasised the importance of deploying a community development worker *at an early stage* to develop these networks. A CDW could (as suggested above) welcome arrivals to a new development, begin the process of recruiting residents to a new community organisation and help make links between the emerging community association and the VCSE sector more widely.

Funding, training and capacity building

89. A feature of best practice is seed funding for new groups and access to training to build their skills. VCSE organisations often hold workshops and offer low-cost (or free) training on a range of subjects (e.g. community action and leadership, fundraising,

trustee responsibilities, managing volunteers, creating a constitution, licensing, social media). A funded CDW could have a 'community chest' for new groups to apply to for small costs such as renting of a hall, refreshments, materials etc.

90. Interestingly, one interviewee stated that while the CDW had just such a grant pot available, few demands had been made upon it: '*what we are finding is that where is a space for people to meet then money is not really needed*' (Gloucester City Council interview). Nevertheless, different community groups may need a variety of start-up resources. For some activities, access to community chest funding could be the difference between that new activity 'taking off' or not.

91. Continuously building the skills of community organisations is another key element in the creation of successful communities. Community development workers should 'plan their own demise' because the local community should have developed the capabilities, confidence, networks and VCSE support to 'go it alone'.

92. It is worth noting that this can have benefits for individuals as well as community groups. In Milton Keynes:

> '*community mobilisation (CM) occurs through a gradual process of relationship and capacity building… over time the CM gains an understanding of the needs and aspirations of individuals and groups and gradually encourages them to meet their goals. We have recorded numerous examples of increasing independence arising out of the community mobilisers' work- women returning to education, communities improving their environment, and children extending their experiences and developing new confidence*'(Drake et al, 2014).

Thinking about how the wider VCSE sector might be engaged in a supporting a new community is worth doing at an early stage in the development process.

STEP 6: Support community management of buildings

93. In Step 3, we emphasised the important role that indoor space plays as a focal point for communities and contributor to social cohesion: '*meeting space should be provided early in the development, even if temporary [and] good practice from national experience and local consultation recommends the provision of community centres with flexible spaces, lots of storage and a welcoming feel*' (Wokingham Borough Council, 2014). Elsewhere:

> '*The provision of a community building is very important. Constructing the community building last [on the Kingsway development] definitely wasn't the best way to go- people had to go elsewhere for community facilities and infrastructure and were making friends there, not on the new development*' (Gloucester City Council interview).

94. Local ownership and management of these spaces was likewise a best practice aspiration: *'Transferring assets, such as community centres or parks to local people can give communities a greater opportunity to shape the way these assets are run to ensure that they provide the maximum benefit to local people'* (Future Communities, 2015). The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (2011) found that the benefits of community controlled assets can include:

> *'A sense of community identity and pride; the potential for increased social cohesion; increased confidence, skills and aspirations locally; improved access to services and activities; jobs, training and business opportunities; and physical improvements to the area.'*

Current management of community buildings – study findings

95. Most community centres are leased by the Local Authority to a community association management committee for a nominal fee. The management committee has responsibility for the day to day running of the facility and maintaining income streams. The Local Authority is the 'back-stop' when significant interventions (e.g. major repairs) are required. However, some *'legal, technical and maintenance support is not available from the council anymore'* and centres more often *'signposted to sources of external support, such as Community Matters'* (Local Authority officer interview).

96. Community centres often rely on 2 or 3 key volunteers who have occupied their managerial roles for several years (often much longer). These individuals felt they had 'done their time' but felt unable to step down because there was no one to replace them. This leads to a 'Catch-22' situation: more volunteers are needed but existing volunteers have no capacity to recruit them because management of the community building takes up so much time.

    'All community centres are struggling financially, as are their management committees because there are not enough volunteers.'

97. The pressure on existing volunteers in urban centres is also exacerbated by a lack of external support: *'help is needed with licensing, finances, performance rights licences, and health and safety'* (Town Council interview). One interviewee noted that there used to be regular meetings for community centre representatives, facilitated by the Local Authority. These were a useful forum for discussion and problem solving but are no longer held due to a reduction in officer time and time pressures on volunteers.

98. In rural areas, 90% of village halls are charities operated by two sets of trustees. First, there are the charity or managing charity trustees. These are the people who manage the charity on a day to day basis- in a village hall this will be the management committee. Secondly, there are the holding or custodian trustees. These custodians can be individuals, a body corporate (such as a parish council) or the Official Custodian for Charities. The sole role of these custodians is to hold the title to the property. The remaining 10% of village halls are charitable trusts which are run by the parish council as sole trustees or where a local benefactor has given or sold land

to a parish council including any building on it to be used as a village hall and set out as a charitable trust in the conveyance.

99. In rural areas, volunteers are generally perceived to be doing a good job of running village halls. *'There are enough users and volunteers to sustain groups. Some new volunteers are coming forward and there is a high level of community engagement.'* There was also a general sense that the volunteer supply chain was slightly stronger in villages than urban areas. Yet one Parish Council interviewee told us that demands on volunteers were increasing because of increased usage and that some kind of paid managerial support would be useful.

100. The current situation can be summed up as follows:

- **Community centres in urban areas:**

  Very well-used and often 'bursting at the seams' in terms of the numbers of user groups from within and outside the immediate area. Demand is likely to grow as housing development continues nearby. Management committees are highly pressured as a result of a lack of new volunteers and external support. Majority of committee time is spent running the building, with reduced capacity for community outreach initiatives as a result. Community Centres are likely to resist taking on, for example, full ownership of a community centre with the attendant additional responsibilities.

- **Village halls in rural areas**:

  These are generally very well-used (and often operating at capacity, especially in the evenings) by groups from within and outside the immediate area. Volunteers generally coping well with running the halls although there is some evidence of increased pressure on volunteer resources as a result of increasing user demands. Expansion space is required in various locations to meet increasing demands of user groups.

What models for managing a community building are used elsewhere?

101. The discussion above is illuminating and outlines the problems faced by volunteers on management committees and, crucially, the support that they require. These lessons should be borne in mind when considering the management and ownership of community buildings, whether on existing or new housing developments.

102. However it is provided, a community facility must be 'sustainably managed' (HACT, 2012) for 'the benefit of local people' (Wokingham, 2014). Below, we summarise four examples where the community has taken over control of new or existing facilities:

   a) Birmingham: community control of existing facilities (asset transfer)
   b) Cherwell Community Land Trust: community control of new or existing facilities

c) Hertfordshire Shenley Park Trust: community control of new facilities
d) Caterham Development Trust: community control of new facilities

Example A

COMMUNITY CONTROL OF EXISTING FACILITIES
Local Authority Asset Transfer- Birmingham City Council (source- Community Matters, 2012)
Overview
- A process was designed to be fair, transparent and accountable. The programme was community led - recognising it is more than just the bricks and mortar and should be seen from a community development perspective.   - The community were engaged through structured discussions, independent facilitators and social media.   - Relationships and trust were built with community groups.   - The community were helped to build their capabilities through a programme that focussed on property management and community development.   - Community Matters accredited quality assurance 'VISIBLE' was used as the basis for learning, capacity building and risk management.
Learning
Community Asset Transfer (CAT) is not an easy option. CAT is not resource neutral for any parties. It takes time, capacity, finance and commitment. Champions are needed from all parties- political and key officers and the VCS.

Example B

COMMUNITY CONTROL OF NEW and/ or EXISTING FACILITIES
Cherwell Community Land Trust- a potential ownership model (source: Cherwell CLT interview)
Overview
- Cherwell Community Land Trust (CCLT) is an Industrial and Provident Society formed for the benefit of residents in the towns and villages of North Oxfordshire.   - The CCLT aims to: 1- provide and manage well-designed, high quality and energy efficient affordable homes; 2- provide other community assets to help employment and skills and to help communities remain sustainable
Discussion
The grassroots, community development ethos of the CCLT is consistent with the best-practice principles of sustainable place-making.

- New and existing community centres could be transferred to the CCLT, with the community association running them with CCLT support.
- The CCLT would aim to strengthen community outreach and develop volunteering and capacity building and release.
- The CCLT is well-connected with the VCS and would seek to develop those relationships and bring in support as necessary to assist community volunteers.
- The CCLT ownership role would work most effectively in combination with a community development worker role.

Example C

COMMUNITY CONTROL OF NEW FACILITIES
Development Trust- Shenley Park Development Trust experience (source: Taylor, 2011)
Overview
- Shenley Park Development Trust is a good example of a development trust taking on the development and management of a park and related buildings as part of a new settlement of 900 homes in Hertfordshire.   - A Section 106 agreement required the park to be transferred to Hertsmere Borough Council on the completion of 200 housing units along with an endowment from the developer. In 1992 Hertsmere Borough Council granted a 150- year-long lease to the Shenley Park Trust, which is structured as a charitable trust and company limited by guarantee.   - It is 'dedicated to managing a 45-acre park within the former grounds of Shenley Hospital for community benefit'.   - A financial endowment of £1.5 million was secured for the future maintenance of the park, and £500,000 for laying it out.   - Further income was to come from the renovation and letting of buildings, ten in total including the old stable block, which was converted into flats, and the one surviving block from the mental hospital, which was converted into offices.   - Three quarters of the revenue income to maintain the park and manage the trust now comes from property rentals rather than investments from the endowment.   - Community facilities, such as the Pavilion tea room, and renting out the walled garden, chapel and cricket ground for events, provide additional sources of income.
Learning
A trust is a good way of managing the public realm. There needs to be an adequate endowment to cover long-term management and maintenance: - The best source is property that can be managed well to both generate an income and provide community facilities.   - Funds that can be invested also enable the trust to set up partnerships or attract grants from other sources.

- The scheme needs to have enough 'critical mass' to employ the right calibre of staff and avoid problems of succession.

Example D

COMMUNITY CONTROL OF NEW FACILITIES
Development Trust- Caterham Barracks (source: Taylor, 2011)
Overview
- The site developers were willing, admittedly under pressure from local politicians and residents, to work closely with the community on how to redevelop the site.   - When planning permission was granted, it included a Section 106 agreement under which the developers released £2.5m to a newly-formed local community trust for the building and maintenance of community facilities. This was instead of paying the monies to the local authority or spending them directly on public facilities, as in normal practice.
Learning
- The Caterham Barracks Community Trust, established in 1999, has 12 members from the surrounding community.   - It acts on behalf of new residents in the development but also local residents in the village.   - It also acts as a sounding board for the developer's proposals, preserving the character of the site, insisting on affordable housing, designing a cricket pitch and providing alternative parking for existing villagers.   - It funds a range of economic, social, educational, cultural and sports facilities on the site and manages them in line with wider community needs.

103.   So what might we conclude from this brief overview of community management of buildings? Crucially, all of these examples *'require strong focus on enterprise and income generation'* in order to best achieve long-term financial sustainability (Wokingham, 2014).

104.   Each is underpinned by *'the three principles of best practice that should guide the planning process for community infrastructure in new residential developments: empowerment, community development and stewardship or active governance'* (Taylor, 2011). Yet each of them, it is obvious, has resource implications. As Community Matters makes clear: '*a viable and empowered community requires independent community groups with an enterprising approach, who have the vision, will and passion to have a voice, take ownership, control and power. Community groups often require support and investment over time to achieve this'* (2012).

105.   Similarly, the asset transfer model for existing community centres also requires adequate resourcing. The community, in particular, must be nurtured, which, as Birmingham City Council found 'takes time, capacity, finance and commitment.' Given the interview evidence from CFO's research, this task would be

complicated, given existing community centre capacity issues and the subsequent unwillingness to take on additional responsibilities, such as asset transfer would entail.

106.   All of the options we have described require some staff resource, finance and commitment from a Local Authority. This should include: *'adequate financial and business planning when acquitting assets; ensuring that assets were fit for purpose; a constructive approach to asset transfer and community control of assets on the part of the public body; capacity and leadership within the community; effective governance; financial sustainability'* (Aiken et al, 2011). Success will also involve a good deal of discussion with the community and support by the Local Authority over the longer term. But getting the process correct at the outset will reduce the need for intervention further down the line.

Bibliography

Age UK (2011) '*Pride of Place- How Councillors can improve neighbourhoods for older people.'* Available at: http://www.ageuk.org.uk/Documents/EN-GB/Pride%20of%20Place_How%20councillors%20can%20improve%20neighbourhoods%20for%20older%20people.pdf?dtrk=true

Aiken, M., Cairns B.,Taylor, M and Mora, R., 2011. *Community organisations controlling assets: a better understanding*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/community-organisations-assets-full.pdf

Bacon, N., 2012. *Never Again- avoiding the mistakes of the past. A discussion paper to kick-start the Future Communities consortium*. Social Life. Available at: http://www.social-life.co/media/files/Never_Again.pdf

Barnball, K. L., 1994. 'Collecting data using a semi-structured interview: a discussion paper', in *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 19 (2).   Available at: http://web.ebscohost.com.eor.uhi.ac.uk

Bedfordshire and Luton Voluntary Services Council, 2006. *Strong communities: meeting the social infrastructure needs of new communities*. Available at: http://www.voluntaryworks.org.uk/action-southbeds/documents/MKSMSIReportPlan-FINAL_3_.pdf

Big Lottery Fund, 2011. *Designing and Running a Community Building- reflections from our grant holders.* Available at: www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/pub_designing_running_community_building%20(1).pdf

Cherwell District Council, 2015. *The Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031.* Available at: http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/localplanexamination

Cherwell District Council, 2010. *Cherwell Sustainable Community Strategy- our community, our future*. Available at: http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/media/pdf/s/t/Sustainable_Community_Strategy.pdf

Cherwell District Council, 2011. *Planning Obligations Draft Supplementary Planning Document*. Available at: http://www.cherwell.gov.uk/planningadvice

Commission on Architecture and the Built Environment, 2007. *A Sense of Place- what residents think of their new homes*. Available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110118095356/http:/www.cabe.org.uk/files/a-sense-of-place.pdf

Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 2008. *Creating Successful Masterplans*. Available at: http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110118095356/http:/www.cabe.org.uk/files/creating-successful-masterplans.pdf

Community Matters and HACT, 2012. *Sustainable Community Facilities: A Partnership between Housing Providers and their local communities.* Available at:

http://www.hact.org.uk/sites/default/files/uploads/Archives/2012/04/Sustainable%20Community%20facilities.pdf

Community Renewal. *Building Strong Communities- social infrastructure for sustainable communities.*

Department of Communities and Local Government, 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework*.

DiCicco-Bloom, B. and Crabtree, B. F., 2006. 'The Qualitative Research Interview', in *Medical Education*, 40 (4). Available at: http://web.ebscohost.com.eor.uhi.ac.uk

Drake, D. H., Simmons, K. and Smith, Kate, 2014. 'Building Communities Collaboratively: the Milton Keynes Community Mobiliser Service' in *Community Development Journal*, 49 (2)

Future Communities, 2015. *Community ingredients*. Available at: http://www.futurecommunities.net/

Greater London Authority, 2014. *Shaping Neighbourhoods- Accessible London: Achieving an Inclusive Environment.* Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Accessible%20London%202014_4.pdf

Groves, R., Middleton, A., Murie, A. and Broughton, K., 2003. *Neighbourhoods that Work- a study of the Bournville Estate*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/jr148-neighbourhoods-bournville-birmingham.pdf

Home Office, 2004. *Firm Foundations: the government's framework for community capacity building*. Available at: http://pacesempowerment.co.uk/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/firmFoundations.pdf

Ipsos-MORI, 2007. '*What Works' in Community Cohesion- Research Study conducted for Communities and Local Government and the Commission on Integration and Cohesion*. Available at: http://www.tedcantle.co.uk/publications/025%20What%20works%20in%20community%20cohesion%20Commission%20on%20Integrati.pdf

Knox, M. and Alcock, D., 2002. *Approaches to Community Governance- models for mixed tenure communities*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/system/files/jr135-mixed-tenure-governance.pdf

Matrix Partnership, 2005. *Harlow Area Study- masterplanning principles and sustainability criteria- report produced for Harlow District Council.* Available at: http://www.harlow.gov.uk/

Oxford Brookes Department of Planning, 2006. *Transferable Lessons from the New Towns. Department of Communities and Local Government*. Available at:http://www.futurecommunities.net/files/images/Transferable_lessons_from_new_towns_0.pdf

Planning Portal, 2015. *Community Infrastructure Levy*. Available at: http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/

Power, A., 2004. *Sustainable communities and sustainable development – a review of the sustainable communities plan*. Sustainable Development Commission. Available at: http://sticerd.lse.ac.uk/dps/case/CR/CASEreport23.pdf

Scottish Community Development Centre, 2011. *Assets in Action- a case study of asset based community development in North Glasgow.* Available at: http://www.scdc.org.uk/

Scottish Government, 2008. *Planning Advice Note- Masterplanning*. Available at: http://www.gov.scot/Resource/Doc/244134/0068213.pdf

SQW Consulting, 2008. *Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders: Final Evaluation Report- People, Places, Public Services: Making the Connections*. Department of Communities and Local Government. Available at: http://www.sqw.co.uk/files/5713/8712/8264/80.pdf

Taylor, M, 2011. *Community infrastructure in new residential developments- JRF briefing paper: community assets*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation. Available at: http://www.jrf.org.uk/sites/files/jrf/community-assets-taylor.pdf

Town and Country Planning Association, 2012. *Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today- policies, practices, partnerships and model approaches- a report of the garden cities and suburbs expert group.* Available at: http://www.tcpa.org.uk/data/files/Creating_Garden_Cities_and_Suburbs_Today.pdf

UK Government, 2010. *Community Infrastructure Regulations*. Available at: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukdsi/2010/9780111492390/pdfs/ukdsi_9780111492390_en.pdf

UK Government, 2008. *Planning Act*. http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/29/pdfs/ukpga_20080029_en.pdf

University of Birmingham, 2011. Positively Local. C2- a model for community change. Available at: http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/Documents/college-social-sciences/social-policy/HSMC/publications/2011/positively-local.pdf

Wokingham Borough Council, 2014. *Shaping our New Communities 2014-2026*. Accessed via Wokingham Community Development Team, May 2015

Woodcraft, S., 2011. *Design for Social Sustainability- a framework for creating thriving new communities*. Social Life. Available at: http://www.social-life.co/media/files/DESIGN_FOR_SOCIAL_SUSTAINABILITY_3.pdf

Woodcraft, S., 2012. 'Social Sustainability and New Communities: moving from concept to practice in the UK' in *Procedia- Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 68.

Appendix 1 – Review of literature and best practice in community development and placemaking

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT	
Source	**Key points**
Future Communities, 2015. *Community ingredients*.	- provision of community facilities - community involvement in planning of facilities - community development support worker - community management of assets and facilities - (adaptable) community space (provided at an early stage) - community representation on governance structures - community management of assets and facilities importance of physical design to community cohesion - consultation and engagement with community - creation of social network maintain/ develop links with adjoining neighbourhoods
Drake, D. H., Simmons, K. and Smith, Kate, 2014. 'Building Communities Collaboratively: the Milton Keynes Community Mobiliser Service' in *Community Development Journal*, 49 (2)	-community development support worker -VCS involvement

Wokingham Borough Council, 2014. *Shaping our New Communities 2014-2026*. Accessed via Wokingham Community Development Team, May 2015.	- community involvement in planning of facilities - community development support worker - community management of assets and facilities
Woodcraft, S., 2012. 'Social Sustainability and New Communities: moving from concept to practice in the UK' in *Procedia- Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 68.	- provision of (adaptable) community space - provision of community facilities - maintain/ develop links with adjoining neighbourhoods - ongoing consultation and engagement with community - importance of physical design to community cohesion
Department of Communities and Local Government, 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework.*	
Town and Country Planning Association, 2012. *Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today- policies, practices, partnerships and model approaches- a report of the garden cities and suburbs expert group*	- community development is a long-term commitment - early and ongoing consultation and engagement with community - community representation on governance structures - importance of green spaces to community cohesion - community development worker - community management of assets and facilities
Bacon, N., 2012. *Never Again- avoiding the mistakes of the past. A discussion paper to kick-start the Future Communities consortium*. Social Life	- provision of community space/ facilities - community involvement in planning of facilities - a community-'owned' network - a socially mixed community - importance of physical design to community cohesion - consultation and engagement with community
Woodcraft, S., 2011. *Design for Social Sustainability- a framework for creating*	- (adaptable) community space (provided at an early stage) - community services (provided at an early stage)

thriving new communities. Future Communities	- community development workers - ongoing consultation and engagement with community
University of Birmingham, 2011. *Positively Local. C2- a model for community change*.	- community engagement with agencies - community integration - community capacity building/ release
SQW Consulting, 2008. *Neighbourhood Management Pathfinders: Final Evaluation Report People, Places, Public Services: Making the Connections*. Department of Communities and Local Government	- community engagement with agencies - consultation and engagement with community - community capacity building
Ipsos-MORI, 2007. *'What Works' in Community Cohesion- Research Study conducted for Communities and Local Government and the Commission on Integration and Cohesion.* Department of Communities and Local Government	- a socially mixed community - importance of physical design to community cohesion - consultation and engagement with community - engagement with disadvantaged and ethnic groups - engagement with young people - VCS involvement - access to funding for new community groups/ activities - agency involvement with community
Oxford Brookes Department of Planning, 2006. *Transferable Lessons from the New Towns*. Department of Communities and Local Government.	- community development workers - access to funding for new community groups/ activities - VCS involvement - community management of assets and facilities - maintain/ develop links with adjoining neighbourhoods

	- (adaptable) community space (provided at an early stage) - importance of physical design to community cohesion - early and ongoing consultation and engagement with community - importance of green spaces to community cohesion
Home Office, 2004. *Firm Foundations: the government's framework for community capacity building*.	- community development is a long-term commitment - community space - access to funding for new community groups/ activities - community development support worker - a community-'owned' network - access to training for community members
Power, A., 2004. *Sustainable communities and sustainable development – a review of the sustainable communities plan Sustainable Development Commission*	- importance of physical design to community cohesion - community engagement with agencies - community management of assets and facilities - a socially mixed community - consultation and engagement with community - importance of green spaces to community cohesion - provision of community space/ facilities
Groves, R., Middleton, A., Murie, A. and Broughton, K., 2003. *Neighbourhoods that Work- a study of the Bournville Estate*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation	- early and ongoing consultation and engagement with community - importance of physical design to community cohesion - community engagement with agencies - community management of assets and facilities - a socially mixed community

Knox, M. and Alcock, D., 2002. *Approaches to Community Governance- models for mixed tenure communities*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation.	- early and ongoing consultation and engagement with community - importance of physical design to community cohesion - community engagement with agencies
Community Renewal. *Building Strong Communities- social infrastructure for sustainable communities*	- community space (provided at an early stage) - access to funding for new community groups/ activities - community development support worker - a community-'owned' network - access to training for community members - VCS involvement
Bedfordshire and Luton Voluntary Services Council, 2006. *Strong communities: meeting the social infrastructure needs of new communities*.	- community development work - a community base - a representative community or residents group - grants for start-up and development of community and voluntary organisations - community learning/ leadership development - volunteer development.

MASTERPLANNING AND PHYSICAL DESIGN	
Source	**Key points**
Future Communities, 2015. *Community ingredients*	-poor design has social costs -Local Authority key role in maintaining 'vision' of new development
Wokingham Borough Council, 2014. Shaping our New Communities 2014-2026. Accessed via Wokingham Community Development Team, May 2015.	-consultation and engagement with community

Town and Country Planning Association, 2012. *Creating Garden Cities and Suburbs Today- policies, practices, partnerships and model approaches- a report of the garden cities and suburbs expert group*	- consultation and engagement with community - awareness of history/ heritage
Department of Communities and Local Government, 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework.*	- consultation and engagement with community - awareness of history/ heritage - community involvement in physical design - community involvement in planning new facilities
Woodcraft, S., 2011. *Design for Social Sustainability- a framework for creating thriving new communities*. Future Communities	-allow space in masterplanning for evolution of communities
Scottish Government, 2008. *Planning Advice Note- Masterplanning*	- (early) consultation and engagement with community - community involvement in governance
Commission for architecture and the built environment, 2008. *Creating Successful Masterplans*	- consultation and engagement with community - allow space in masterplanning for evolution of communities - community involvement in physical design
Oxford Brookes Department of Planning, 2006. *Transferable Lessons from the New*	

Towns. Department of Communities and Local Government.	
Matrix Partnership, 2005. *Harlow Area Study- masterplanning principles and sustainability criteria- report produced for Harlow District Council*	- consultation and engagement with community - community involvement in physical design - community involvement in planning new facilities -community involvement in management of new development

COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP OF BUILDINGS	
Source	**Key points**
Wokingham Borough Council, 2014. *Shaping our New Communities 2014-2026*. Accessed via Wokingham Community Development Team, May 2015.	-community trust models have been unsuccessful

Community Matters and HACT, 2012. *Sustainable Community Facilities: A Partnership between Housing Providers and their local communities*	- a community development approach
	- community asset transfer
	    ➢ CAT not an easy option
	    ➢ CAT not resource neutral
	    ➢ Business planning, robust governance, management and finances needed
	    ➢ Recognise the value and true worth of community contribution
	    ➢ Champions needed from all parties

Big Lottery Fund, 2011. *Designing and Running a Community Building- reflections from our grant holders.*	- small, focused project team with appropriate skills - make sure financial commitments are secure from the start - Take time to secure the appropriate professionals from the start - Take time over the design

	- Request the true cost at the outset - Manage community expectations from the start - ensure good community consultation
Taylor, M, 2011. *Community infrastructure in new residential developments- JRF briefing paper: community assets*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation	- local communities need to be involved throughout the planning process - much greater attention needs to be given to future stewardship from the start of the planning process - the potential roles of community organisations (e.g. PC, CLT, VCS organisations) need to be planned from the start - creative approach to asset transfer to community ownership - need to ensure sustainable income streams from the start - [new residential settlement] offers the chance to plan from the outset resourced, empowered communities
Aiken, M., Cairns B., Taylor, M and Mora, R., 2011. *Community organisations controlling assets: a better understanding*. Joseph Rowntree Foundation	Benefits of community-controlled assets: - a sense of identity and pride - the potential for increased social cohesion - increased confidence, skills and aspirations locally - improved access to services and activities - jobs, training and business opportunities - physical improvements to the area What helps success?: - Adequate financial and business planning when acquiring assets - Ensuring assets were fit for purpose - A constructive approach to asset transfer and community control on the part of public bodies - Capacity and leadership in the community - Effective governance - Financial sustainability