



**The following organisations have endorsed this checklist:**

- Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire
- Extinction Rebellion Leicester
- Footpaths: Routes to a green life
- Green Christian Leicester City Group
- Green Guardians Leicester: Local Muslims working to tackle climate change
- Greenlight: Creating Christ, Creation and Community
- Harborough Woodland
- Hindu Climate Action
- Leicester Environmental Youth Board
- Leicester Friends of the Earth
- Leicester Green Party
- Leicestershire Labour for a Green New Deal (2-page summary of LLGNDs position on practical climate actions: <https://www.labourgnd.uk/gnd-explained>)
- South Highfields Neighbours
- Sustainable Harborough
- Transition Leicester
- Women's Equality Party, Leicester and Leicestershire

## New Housing Developments: Climate and sustainability checklist

### 1. Housing density of at least 70 dwellings per hectare (dph).

- This density allows a combination of low-rise flats, terraced and a few two- and three-storey semi-detached homes (without garages), along with personal green space for most and public green space for all.
- 70 dph allows for amenities to be close enough for people to easily walk or cycle rather than becoming car-dependant. Lower housing densities make distances less viable for walking and cycling and reduces the opportunities for physical activity. It also reduces green space.
- This density allows for housing for people of all size of family and income instead of largely providing for high income households who already have more choices than others.

### 2. Community hubs scattered over the development, one within 10 mins walk / 800m of every home.

Such a hub would contain:

- Several shops including food, and encouraging independent local businesses
- Public toilets
- Parcel pick-up and drop-off using smart lockers
- Secure bike storage and mobility scooter storage
- Electric car and bike charging points
- Bike/E-Bike and car share hire point - all bookable online
- A bus stop directly linking to local transport interchanges and any other local community hubs
- Pick-up point for "school walking train"
- Children's play area
- Mini-park/small village green with sitting area, grass and trees and food growing
- Carbon zero co-working spaces for people who cannot or don't want to work at home
- Community information and meeting points designed to promote mixing

If there is more than one hub in a development they would be connected by a frequent bus service.

### 3. Schools, health and community facilities.

- Carbon zero primary and secondary schools designed to be used by the community in evenings, weekends and holidays – located next to/in a community hub and seen as the heart of the community.
- Community health and wellbeing projects in a community hub.

#### **4. Transport hierarchy**

Designed to promote active and public transport, discourage private car use, and well connected with paths and green spaces – see Transport checklist.

#### **5. Diverse and affordable homes to keep people in the community.**

These would include a range of sizes and prices.

- Both private and rental tenure – at least 15% affordable and 15% social housing.
- Designed to work for people with a range of incomes, health and age. This will enable people to continue living in the area and community they know as they pass through different stages of life.

#### **6. Homes designed to be at least carbon neutral and water efficient.**

This would include the following:

- High levels of insulation to minimise heating and cooling energy requirements.
- Solar thermal for hot water and solar photovoltaics for electricity – oriented to maximise heat and generation.
- Off the gas grid with heating via heat pumps – ideally community-based district heating using heat pumps, rather than individual homes.
- Rainwater collection and water saving features.

#### **7. Local renewable community energy generation with local involvement.**

This could power district heat pumps or provide local electricity at lower cost for residents. It would not include biomass.

#### **8. High quality mixed use green spaces in the right places.**

Central and as part of community hubs, not just around the edges – and with community involvement in the management. This would promote local health and cohesion.

#### **9. Local opportunities to grow food in private and public spaces.**

For example in gardens, parks and allotments.

#### **10. Green and blue infrastructure to mitigate climate change.**

- Shade trees in all streets to reduce overheating in summer and reduce wind-chill in winter.
- SUDs drainage, ponds and water courses.
- Minimisation of hard areas and maximisation of natural ground (this will also facilitate food growing).

#### **It's not easy to make this happen but the following have been shown to help around the world:**

Compelling vision well communicated, strong inspiring leadership, empowered communities who are involved in the planning; research, data and analysis; partnership and advocacy; addressing inequalities; adopting policy; investment; “hard” and “soft” measures; evaluation and adaptation.

See this briefing from the Town and Country Planning Association for more information:

<https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guide-the-20-minute-neighbourhood>

While this checklist describes climate-appropriate measures for medium to large new housing developments, most suggestions are equally applicable to smaller new development, for example carbon-neutral homes, housing density, tree cover, access to green spaces and provision of charging points.

Where a new development takes place directly up against the edge of an existing town/village, we recommend the existing town/village be up-graded to provide the facilities listed in the checklist where possible. However, community hubs will still be needed for homes in the new development more than 10 minutes' walk from pre-existing services.

These points are a foundation, not an exhaustive checklist. We hope you would see it as a basis for developing more cohesive and more sustainable communities, and we really hope this list will inspire you.