

**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: Transport and the Climate

A housing development designed to reduce carbon emissions, support people from every walk of life and facilitate community connections should contain many of the following details. If it doesn't, but claims to be green or sustainable, it's probably greenwash.

### 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.
- 70 dph allows for housing for people of all sizes of family and income, instead of largely catering for high-income households who already have more choices than others.

### 2. Serious car demand management.

This would consist of at least three or more of the following:

- Only parking space for one car per home provided for the development as a whole – this would not prevent people having more than one car, so long as others had none.
- No pavement parking. To be enforced by parking bays for individual vehicles separated by trees. Parking bays to include electric charging points.
- Residential parking permits for all parking, with substantially higher costs for second and third vehicles, with provision for disabled visitors.
- No provision of garages or off-road/front drive parking – but provision of secure bike and mobility scooter storage in front of the homes with electric charging points.
- Parking moved to ends of streets with electric charging points (or better still, the edge of the estate) with only car share cars, blue badge holders, taxis, emergency and delivery vehicles able to access the housing streets, with provision for disabled people.
- All housing arranged in low traffic neighbourhoods.
- Through traffic for bikes and pedestrians but never cars – car routes always more circuitous and less convenient than active travel.
- 20mph speed limit across entire development.

### **3. Provision of real services and amenities within active transport range.**

Distances to key services:

- Within 5 mins/400m walk: bus stop, a community growing area and/or green space.
- Within 10 mins/800m walk: primary school, community hub (see below), post office, pub, local shops, childcare facilities, children's play area, public green space.
- Within 20 mins/1500m walk: medical centre/GP, secondary school, at least one large employer.

### **4. Local employment.**

EITHER local employment (within 5 miles) for at least one person per household OR a relationship with two large local employers providing shuttle buses to match with shift times picking up from community hubs and one large employer within 6 miles and a direct segregated cycle path.

### **5. 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 and a post office
- 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

### **6. Segregated well signposted cycle paths, networked within the development and direct beyond the development.**

- From the development to Leicester – direct as the crow flies and off-road.
- From the development to the nearest large town – direct as the crow flies and off-road.
- From the development to the nearest three large employers – direct as the crow flies.
- Directly from the consolidation/delivery hub to the community hub (all community hubs if more than one).
- A network of segregated cycle routes across the development ensuring access to schools, community hubs and green spaces.

### **7. Bus or mass public transit service.**

- All buses stopping at any stop would run to the nearest community hub and a frequent service would connect the community hubs if there was more than one
- This would be supported by developers by things like:
  - i. the provision of free bus passes for a year to new residents
  - ii. provision of extra services where needed and guaranteed for at least 5 years
- The bus service would be in place and running as soon as residents moved in.
- This would run 7 days a week with services at least every 15 mins and up to 11pm at night to
  - i. Leicester
  - ii. The nearest large town
  - iii. A real transport interchange like Leicester, Loughborough, Melton or Market Harborough centres.

## **8. A freight/delivery consolidation hub.**

This would provide some local employment as well as make the development safer, cleaner and less congested. It should be at least part funded by developers' contributions and local large freight using and delivering companies (like Amazon). It should be:

- On the edge of the development, not within it.
- Linked to the community hubs by segregated cycle lanes. If the size of a development is small, then the community hub can be on the edge rather than the middle of the development and be combined with the delivery hub – so long as it's still within 10 mins walking distance.
- Sorting, storing and deliveries from these by cargo bike and E-cargo bike to the community hubs.

## **9. Practicalities.**

- Once put in place as requirements (and these things should be made formal requirements to earn planning permission), councils need to enforce them. Otherwise, such details often slip through the cracks once building starts.
- Many of these processes and structures – such as bus services, car share schemes and community hub staffing – need to be put in place so that they are operational as the first residents move into a development. This is because transport choices are much easier to change before they become habits...adding facilities later will attract much less support.
- Developers should be required to both help fund these actions, and also to promote them consistently to new buyers.

Many new large housing developments are currently being proposed across Leicestershire and Leicester due to population increase, mostly in Leicester where the space for new housing is very limited. Many of these developments are freestanding or on the very edge of towns, villages and the city.

At the same time, both Leicestershire county and Leicester city have declared climate emergencies. They rightly recognise that if we don't reduce our carbon emissions drastically in the next 10-30 years, the world we live in will become unrecognisable and unfit for us, our children and future generations.

We need to change our patterns, cultures and choices around transport and housing and ensure that new build does not add to our environmental problems when it could be a real part of the solutions. This will enable us and our councils to focus our limited resources on the massive transport and housing retrofit problems we face.

New housing provides a wonderful opportunity to plan for solutions – from prioritising active and public transport to reducing energy use and generating renewable energy.

How can we make sure that the new housing developments across the city and county are fit to inhabit in 50 years' time, and allow us to face, minimise and live with the climate crisis? We can make sure new developments include the things listed below.

This is one of a set of very simple checklists from Climate Action Leicester and Leicestershire about what is needed locally for new development to help us meet the UK's target to reach zero carbon by 2050. We hope they will inspire you to support the opportunity for positive action to tackle the climate emergency, at the same time as improving people's lives.