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Presented by:: Dr Elanor Warwick, Clarion Housing Group 'Hackney' Picturing Lockdown project  
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## Housing Design Challenges – External Areas

28/01/2021

- **We have been radically designing new housing typologies only since the 1950s.** We can now see where uncertainty about the value of ground floor spaces has caused many to fall short of the great places we should expect. However, a number of schemes in recent years have shown how the challenges of outside and communal spaces can be overcome. Bourne Estate, Camden Courtyards, Elephant Park, Claredale Street, Kidbrooke Village, Coleville Estate and Great Kneighton Cambridge are just some of the great examples of the good design of outside and communal space.
- **The pandemic, as well as climate change may lead to the increased use of open walkways, giving the potential to improve the links between inside and outside, animating outside areas and improving security.** Enlivening parts of the building in this way or encouraging resident use of the outside spaces and streets for socialising need not be at the expense of residents indoors, however where more animated uses such as kitchens front the social spaces with quieter areas on the opposite side.
- **The ingredients for good places include not only good design, but good build quality, management and maintenance as well as the building of a strong community.** Design needs to foster pride in people's homes which help them look after and use their spaces fully. The significance of external areas hinges on how much internal space you have, but where design has failed, work can be done to retrofit and revitalise neglected spaces with all of these aspects working together well.
- **We need to embed the design of recycling and waste at an early stage, this makes for a better scheme.** Care is needed to ensure bins do not degrade the quality of the environment, with good siting, use of materials and management practices to avoid attracting flytipping or crime.



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- **To avoid crime in outside spaces you need good surveillance and visibility so that people feel comfortable and able to informally police their own spaces.** This can't happen if spaces are too permeable with routes not overlooked. If people feel unsafe they will not use rear or underground car parks or cycle stores – poor lighting, blank facades and poor security of access all contribute to this. Little things are important so pay attention to the details – try to understand how the space would look and feel for a resident - or someone wishing to commit a crime.
- **Post pandemic, residents may use their homes far more intensively** – it will be vital to be able to reach quality outside spaces quickly and to use them well, possibly for exercise as well as relaxation, spaces to be in as much as to move through. The demands on outside spaces will therefore be higher than ever. Look ahead and thinking about the experience of the users of the space help to ensure external spaces will thrive in decades to come.

### Useful Links

Housing Design Awards <https://hdawards.org/>

Building for a Healthy Life

[https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure\\_3.pdf](https://www.udg.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/files/14JULY20%20BFL%202020%20Brochure_3.pdf)

Our Waste, Our resources strategy

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/765914/resources-waste-strategy-dec-2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765914/resources-waste-strategy-dec-2018.pdf)



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**Speakers:**

**Attendees: 53**

David Birkbeck - Chief Executive, Design for Homes.

Paul Karakusevic - Partner, Karakusevic Carson Architects

Michael Robinson-Moltke - Senior Waste Consultant, Santec

Catherine Linney and Mark Headley - South East Designing Out Crime Officers, Metropolitan Police Service

Ayo Allu - Director of Design, Technical and Innovation, Clarion Housing Group

Dr Elanor Warwick – Head of Strategic Policy and Research, Clarion Housing Group