

London Tenants Federation

Bringing together London's borough-wide council tenant federations and organisations

‘Lifetime Neighbourhoods’ – Tenants’ Definition

A ‘lifetime neighbourhood’ is one that has:

Communal spaces, facilities, services and activities - well run, accessible, affordable and relevant to all:

- community centres and meeting places that are accessible to all within our communities
- amenities for young people and support for them to engage
- a wide range of social amenities and facilities accessible, affordable and inclusive to all residents in an area. (The market determines that too much is inaccessible to those on low incomes or dependent on benefits).
- neighbourhood-based public services and facilities which are needed; e.g. for the range of health, education, leisure and economic needs. Localisation, not centralisation.
- well-designed and maintained, car-free play spaces for children
- well-equipped and well-managed public parks and green spaces
- safe, green and living streets and public realm (including building frontages and interfaces).
- accessible, affordable and extensive public transport links
- respect for heritage and the conservation of the positive character of local neighbourhoods
- access to allotments, food growing and community gardens
- a vibrant and relevant local economy, especially small workplaces and sustainable good quality jobs
- local shopping parades and corner shops
- funding for community-led projects and initiatives
- nearby spaces and zones on the edges of communities for specific specialist needs, i.e. local town centres, major leisure facilities, green belt

Homes that meet out needs:

- well-designed estates – with no nooks and crannies
- adaptable ‘lifetime homes’ that can change as peoples’ needs and family make-up changes, assessable to the elderly and disabled
- good space standards; equivalent to or higher than Parker Morris
- allocations policies that recognise community needs and care for elderly
- housing supply to reflect need rather than the market

- affordability to be defined as a rent that all tenants can genuinely afford
- high standards of management and maintenance of our homes
- positive investment in council homes

Good consultation, democratic accountability and empowerment of communities:

- democratic and accountable structures that genuinely involve tenants at all levels of decision-making about our homes and communities
- local authorities that engage in proper consultation. That means genuine involvement and empowerment, not information-giving sessions after the decisions have already been made
- real involvement in decision making from initial ideas to final product, so that all residents have a sense of ownership
- support for and development of vibrant local self-organised grassroots networks of social co-operation, solidarity and mutual aid
- government that engages in proper consultation
- tenants and residents will remain apathetic until councils and governments start to deliver
- people who live in a community have full control over what they need.
- all residents to have a sense of ownership of their communities, including the widest possible consultation and democratic accountability including young and old, disabled and BME residents
- residents to be consulted, drive the agenda, own and run the process there after
- funding to enable residents to represent themselves and govern their own communities
- investment in communities to ensure that all can take part and community needs are addressed
- recognise and support natural, organic communities and networks, rather than impose artificial boundaries
- social and environmental sustainability of neighbourhoods
- long-term, joined up thinking for community benefit.

Summary: All Londoners should have the opportunity to enjoy a good quality environment in an active and supportive local community. Ensuring this means planning for lifetime neighbourhoods in which communities are empowered and in which local shops, social and community facilities, streets, parks and open spaces, local services, decent homes and public transport are affordable and accessible to everyone now and for future generations.