

Thinking New Towns

Did you grow up in a new town?
What was it like?
Find out more inside



Hemel Hempstead

Thinking New Towns

Hemel Hempstead

This education resource is part of the Talking New Towns oral history project about the Hertfordshire new towns. It is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The partner organisations are: The Dacorum Heritage Trust Ltd, Welwyn-Hatfield Museum Service and Stevenage Museum.

A separate resource pack is available with content from Stevenage and Hatfield.

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Introduction:

“I think it’s one of the best moves that we’ve made and I do truly love Hemel Hempstead...”

Una Taber

Over the past 2 years The Dacorum Heritage Trust has been working, in partnership, on a Heritage Lottery Funded project to gather memories of Hemel Hempstead during the 1950s new town era. Clips of these oral histories are available on a new website called www.talkingnewtowns.org.uk

There is also an animation, available on the project website, which gives an exciting glimpse into the experiences of two Londoners, moving out to Hemel Hempstead, during this time of development. Through their interesting and sometimes funny stories, you can see how the lives of real people were changed forever.

We have created this useful education pack to help teachers tell the story of the new town and it’s pioneers. The pack includes information, historic images and tailor made tasks to help bring this time period to life.

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Children drawing their ideas for a new town of the future, at the Talking New Towns exhibition in the Marlowes by the Dacorum Heritage Trust Ltd.

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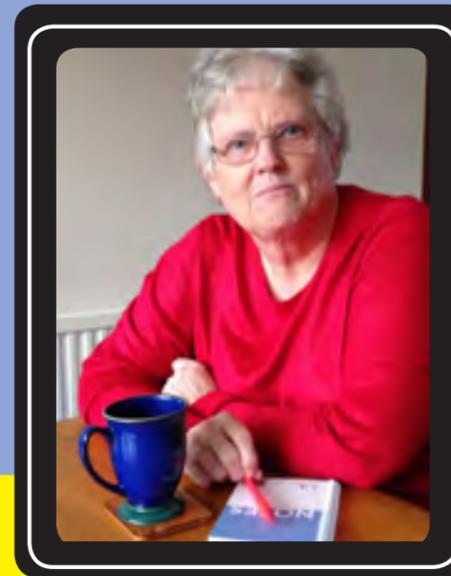
Meet our interviewees

As part of the Talking New Towns project we have interviewed people who came to Hemel Hempstead during the new town era, as well as people who lived there before. We have also been able to use archived interviews to provide other interesting stories. The quotes from these people are featured throughout this booklet.



Una Taber

Originally from Edgware, Middlesex. She was pregnant when she moved with her Husband and son to Newfield Land in July 1951



Meg McCourt

Had been living in Botswana due to her husband's job. While she was pregnant, they moved to back to England with their daughter and chose Hemel Hempstead due to its close proximity to London

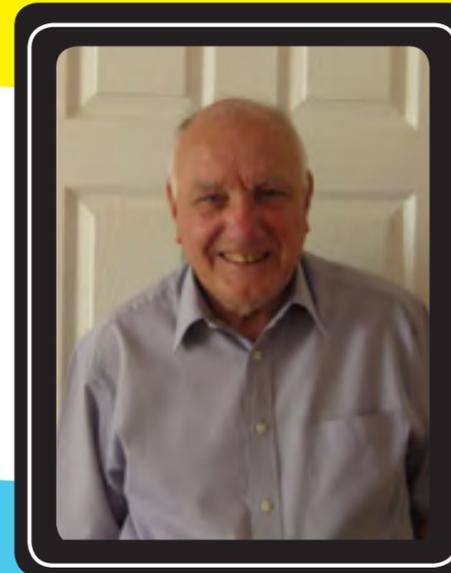
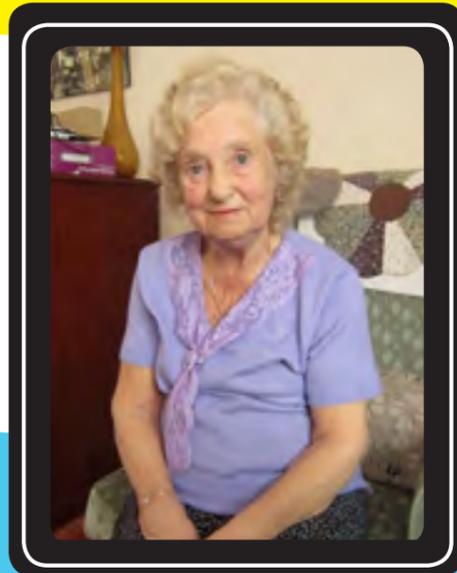


Valerie Weaving

Moved to Hemel Hempstead as a child from Cricklewood in London so that the family could be closer to her father's job at Addressograph-Multigraph

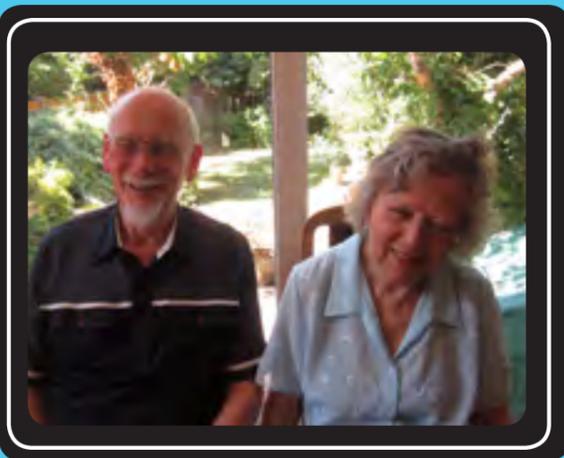
Eileen Bull

Moved to Hemel Hempstead with her husband in 1954



Derek Townsend

Was born in Hemel Hempstead and moved out to Tring in 1962



Tony and Sonia Waterton

Were residents in Hemel Hempstead before the new town was developed

Eileen Waite

Moved to Sawyers Way in Hemel Hempstead, with her husband, in 1951

Nellie Black

Was born in 1918, and moved out of London for health reasons in 1951, to Adeyfield

Gwen Marshall

Lived in Hemel Hempstead and was formerly the Mayor

Phyliss Coomber (nee Wetherall)

Moved to Hemel Hempstead in 1952 and worked for Rolls Razor and Addressograph-multigraph

What is a new town?

A new town is a planned town, built in a short period of time. It is typically built where there was no large town before. The planning is usually done with some idea of what the ideal city might look like.

Before the new towns

In the decades before and after the First World War, people continued to move from the country into the towns and the housing was overcrowded and outdated. Many working people lived in dark, damp houses, with few of the facilities we take for granted. Things needed to change.

Some forward-thinking employers had built model villages for their workers, places like Port Sunlight and Bournville. Another solution was suggested by Ebenezer Howard in his book *To-morrow: A Peaceful Path to Real Reform*. He outlined his vision for garden cities: planned, self-contained communities surrounded and limited by greenbelts, a blend of town and country with easy access to work and leisure. In 1903 Howard and his backers began building Letchworth Garden City, turning his ideas into reality and laying the foundation for the later new towns.

When the soldiers came home from the First World War the elected government promised homes fit for heroes and following the 1919 Housing Act, a million council houses were built over the next two decades. The Becontree estate to the east of London in Barking and Dagenham was built by the London County Council. It was the biggest housing estate in the world, with 26,000 houses built between 1921 and 1935 housing 100,000 people. But London was still struggling to house its population.

Wartime destruction

During the Second World War the housing situation in London grew desperate as the city was bombed: thousands of houses were destroyed and many more damaged. With the end of the war in sight, planning began to tackle the pressing challenge to re-house Londoners. Sir Patrick Abercrombie's Greater London Plan laid down plans to build new houses in the bombed out areas in central London, the suburbs within the greenbelt and a ring of eight new satellite towns.

The New Towns Act

In 1945 the Labour government set up a New Towns Commission, headed up by Lord Reith. The Reith Commission recommended that:

- The new towns should have a population of up to 60,000
- They should be built as far as possible on greenfield sites
- There should be mainly single family housing at low density
- The homes had to be organised in neighbourhoods around a primary school, a pub and shops to meet everyday needs
- There should be a balance of housing and jobs

The Greater London Plan and the New Towns Act combined to preserve the greenbelt around big cities while providing decent housing for a growing population. Eight of the first phase of fourteen new towns in the 1940s were built around London.

The New Towns Act of 1946 gave the government the power to designate areas as new towns and set up development corporations to plan and build them. Stevenage was the first to be designated, followed in Hertfordshire by Hemel Hempstead in 1947, and Welwyn and Hatfield in 1948.

The foundation stone for the first house was laid by the Mayor and Bailiff of Hemel Hempstead, Councillor Selden, on 23 April 1949. However, it was nearly 10 months before the first houses were ready for occupation. The first occupation was in February 1950 when the keys of four houses in Homefield Road were presented to bricklayers working on the estate.



Surveying a site, 1960.

Stevenage Museum P9005



The end of the new towns

By 1979 a lot of the houses built under the New Towns Act were being sold off, and the incoming Conservative government, led by Margaret Thatcher, decided to dissolve the development corporations. All remaining land and houses were sold off and the profit from the sale went back to the state finances. The new towns were left to develop along the lines of other towns across the country.



Shops along the Marlowes.

CNT/HH/4/3/1/24 HALS

Activity

What is a difference between a new town and other towns developed through time?

Give two examples of earlier planned towns.

What was housing like for many poorer people in big cities?

What happened during the Second World War that made the problem worse?

What was the solution suggested for London?

For and against debate

The uncertainties brought a storm of opposition from local residents. The Hemel Hempstead Protection Association was re-invigorated to orchestrate part of the opposition. Farmers were concerned at the loss of 5,000 acres of land at a time of considerable food shortage. Large numbers of people were to be displaced from their homes in the Marlowes area alone.

For

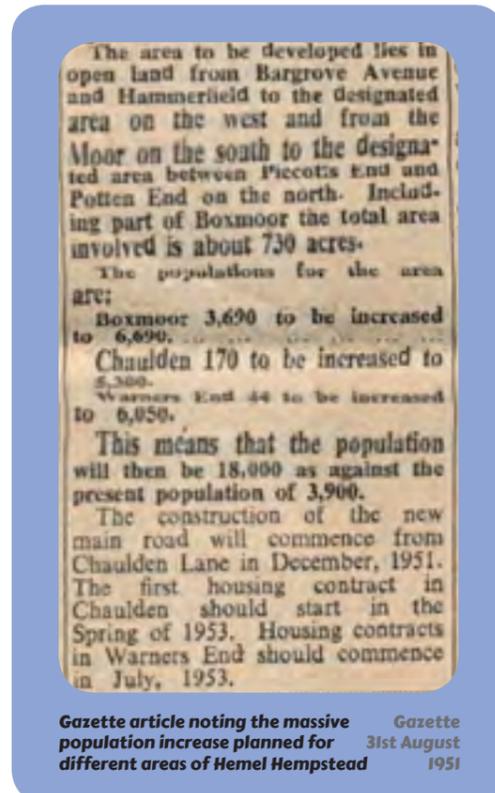
People coming into Hemel Hempstead new town came up against difficulties, including trying to fit in with the local people.

From Cricklewood in London, my Dad worked for Addressograph-Multigraph. He used to travel every day on the, on a bus they used to, a coach, I can remember that. I remember, I used to remember him coming home when was in, in Cricklewood and we used to wait at the gate on a Friday for him to come, because he would have gone to the sweet shop and bought me sweets. But then when we moved to Hemel, I can remember walking on a Friday to meet him from work, there used to be tree in Wood Lane End and we used to go there and meet him and he would have sweets for us, dolly mixtures and jelly babies and things like that."

Valerie Weaving

My husband came out of the army in 1946, we knew that we'd never get a house on the Wembley Council, so he started at Rolls Razor because it was like a family affair. If you worked there or a brother you got in. We were just like a family...I met my husband during the war, when I was 15 and I married him when I was nearly 19. I think it was about a year before they said that they were planning to build another factory for the, only for the electric razor and being as my husband worked on the electric razor, he was allowed to come out here and I got on to the Wembley Council and my name was taken off and we came down here. And that's why we pioneered in 1952.

Phyliss Coomber



Gazette article noting the massive population increase planned for different areas of Hemel Hempstead
Gazette 31st August 1951

When we got married we went to live with my husband's parents in Edgware and we had a bedroom and a living room that we had to share everything else. Well then my son was born and that wasn't too bad that carried on alright and then I was going, expecting my daughter and it just didn't seem like a lot of room so we got in touch with the Hendon borough asking if there was any chance of us having a flat or house and they said no we'd have to have at least 4 children before they'd move us and then a week later we had a letter asking us if we would be interested in coming out to Hemel Hempstead.

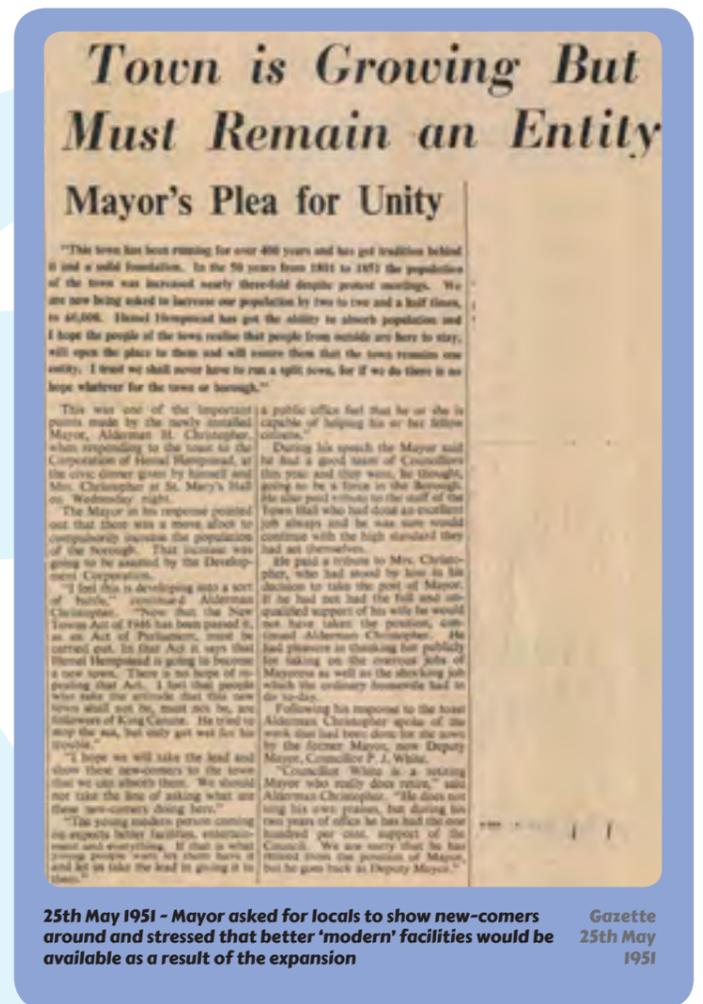
Una Taber

Against

Many local residents had strong opinions about the plans, with a focus on the loss of farms and rural feel.

All I know is the people who were born and lived in Hemel Hempstead were penalised by not being allocated a council house. We put our name down in 1956 but we were not entitled one, its GLC and London people only housing them for the jobs that were in industrial areas. So I do know that for a fact...

Derek Townsend



25th May 1951 - Mayor asked for locals to show new-comers around and stressed that better 'modern' facilities would be available as a result of the expansion
Gazette 25th May 1951

Activity



Temporary shop on Candlefield Road, CNT/HH/OIO/NC22 HALS

It was a little market town surrounded by farms, a ring of farms, which had been there, you know, ever since feudal times or beyond and they had all been compulsory purchased so there were these sad farmers thrown out after generations and these, all these farms then became housing estates. What was so particularly upsetting was that it was obviously people from London coming in and they were brought in by coach to start with, to see it, then they came and they were, they seemed to be so ungrateful and so well, it's this sort of tribal thing that they were different and they would stand at bus stops and say "Oh we don't like it here, wish we were back in London" and they were getting these beautiful houses and we'd lost all our farms.

What was so particularly upsetting was that it was obviously people from London coming in and they were brought in by coach to start with, to see it, then they came and they were, they seemed to be so ungrateful and so well, it's this sort of tribal thing that they were different and they would stand at bus stops and say "Oh we don't like it here, wish we were back in London" and they were getting these beautiful houses and we'd lost all our farms.

Sonia Waterhouse

Council Protest Over Compulsory Land Purchase

Development Corporation Criticised

AT a special meeting of the Borough Council last Thursday evening, it was unanimously agreed to pass an objection to the proposal of the Development Corporation to put into effect a Compulsory Land Purchase Order affecting land in the Chaulden Lane area. Chairman of the New Town Planning Committee (Cllr. Mayo) told the Council that the Development Corporation did not make known the first Compulsory Purchase Order until the Friday after the Council had retired for the August recess, he was not prepared to say whether this was deliberate or not.

All the land on the right of Chaulden Lane is included in the Purchase Order, including the allotments, and it is hoped that further information regarding the use of this land will be made available later.

A few draft documents were reviewed by the Council just prior to the late Council meeting, but these did not give the Committee sufficient time to go fully into the matter. He recommended that the Council ask the Town and Country Planning Minister to extend the time for raising objections to a period of three months, so that the plans might be given more fully.

Cllr. Mayo went on to say that the New Town Committee felt that the areas under development were not being adequately dealt with and that there was ample scope for the Development Corporation to extend the development of the land they already had possession of before reaching on new areas. The Committee were also worried, he went on to say, by the lack of uniformity between industrial development and housing, which should be kept at an equal pace, to avert disaster.

He explained that the Development Corporation had stated that it was their intention to leave the allotments in Chaulden Lane as they were at present, and if this was a fact there would little object in purchasing them.

Cllr. Dunster agreed with the Chairman of the New Town Planning Committee, saying that he was of the opinion that the Development Corporation had ample scope to improve out what they were already doing and that it was up to the Council to watch very closely, and act as they thought best for the future of the town.

The Council agreed to the proposed resolution and before them and carried out the rest of their business in closed session.

31/08/1951 *Gazette*

LETTERS

NEW TOWN.

Sir,—I have read the speech of the Mayor at the Civic dinner and, with all due respect, I cannot agree that those of us who feel that the ancient Borough has been given a raw deal under the New Towns Act should now sit back and acquiesce. Conservatives, it is true, backed the New Towns Act, or majority of them did, but they can have had little or no idea of the way in which it would be carried out by the Socialist Government.

Hemel Hempstead was designated against the judgment of the author of the Greater London Plan and in spite of reasoned protests at Inquiry meetings. It is true that Hemel Hempstead has increased in population over the years and that there must have been protests before. Now, however, property owners are to have their property demolished and purchased compulsorily at an inadequate price. The thin edge of the wedge of Nationalisation of the Land is with us. The Government should put aside political motives and rescind the Designation Order for our town. If they refuse to do so—we should continue to press any future government to see reason and halt a development which we believe to be inimical to the town and out of all proportion to the Borough's size.

RUSSEL STEELE,
Penrhyn Lodge,
Gloucester Gate, N.W.I.

15/06/1951 *Gazette*

**What would you have done in 1946?
Make a note of the arguments,
then make your decision: for or against?**

For:

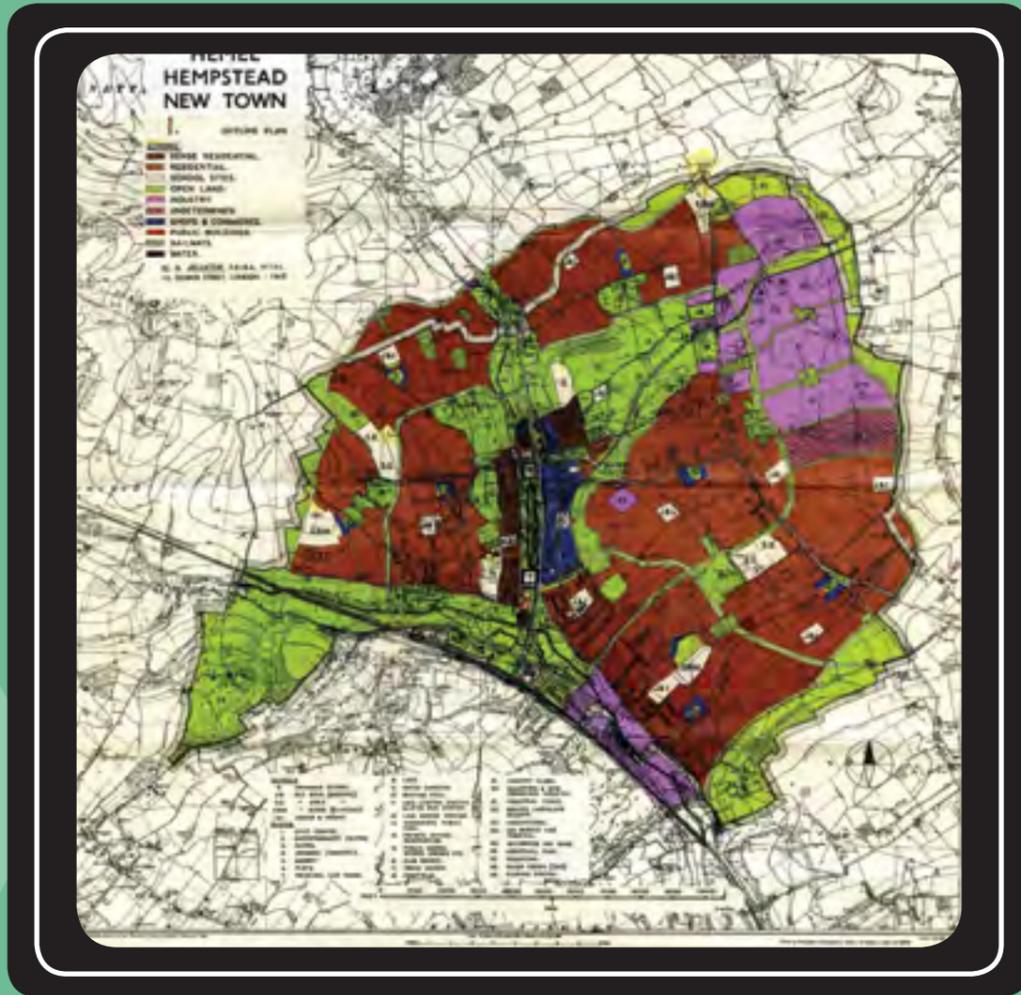
Against:

Overall, I decided for / against because:

Building Hemel Hempstead

Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe drew up the initial plans for Hemel Hempstead new town 4th February 1947. Jellicoe wanted to build a city in a park instead of a city in a garden. His initial radical plan with ample green areas were rejected and a more moderate version produced.

In order to build the new town the government bought almost 24 square kilometres of land. Because Hemel Hempstead was already a developed market town the new neighbourhoods were built between and around the existing housing.



Hemel Hempstead New Town 1947, Jellicoe
DACHT: HH 2351 The Hemel Hempstead Local History and Museum Society

Before the first residents moved into Adeyfield basic structures such as water, electricity and gas supply, sewage treatment and phone lines was agreed and being built. By 1952 the Development Corporation had built 12 miles of road and 28 miles of sewage for the new town.

Letter for activity

July 1946

Dear Students,

Hemel Hempstead has been selected to become a New Town by our Government. We need to house 40,000 new people and we need your help!

We need to make wise choices about which buildings should be constructed in the new parts of the town. You will need to include the following:

Homes (for 40,000 people)

Sports Centre

Pub

Hospital

Once you have chosen the buildings, you will need to draw up plans in the form of a large-scale map.

Please present your map to your teacher who will send it on to me.

Yours Sincerely

Gwen Marshall

The Mayor of Hemel Hempstead

Activity

Planning a new town

Once you have read the letter on p15 you might want to reflect on the following questions:

What kind of buildings will you need in your new town?

Discuss and write a list, compare with what exists or does not exist where you live now. How many do you need ; schools, fire station, grocery store, hospital and so on.

Commercial
i.e. local shops

Residential
i.e. houses

Industrial
i.e. warehouses

Municipal
i.e. library

Growth

A town is not built in one year. How would you prioritise the order of the building. In Hemel some of the first houses were given to builders discuss why?

1st year

2nd year

Here are some more questions to consider:

Where will people be employed? In what industries?

Are there some sorts of buildings we could really do without?

Do we need more than one grocery store?

Will any critical factors change with time (e.g., population, income level, and/or land availability and value)?

Location, location, location

Next discuss locations for the various buildings. Consider would it be best to put.... discuss.

- A grocery store on the outskirts of town?
- A school next to a prison?
- A library near a school?
- A school on the opposite side of town from residential areas?
- A park next to a neighbourhood?

Draw map of your new town:
Would everything be on a main street or widely dispersed?

Compare your new town to the development of Hemel Hempstead today.

What would you keep in Hemel Hempstead today?

What would you like to improve or change?

Neighbourhoods

The neighbourhood is a key element in developing the synthetic new towns and hoping for authentic communities to emerge. You are meant to feel connected with your local area and your neighbourhood. This is where your school, corner shop, maybe your church, your fish and chip shop, hairdresser/barber and glass recycling is. A neighbourhood is meant to be walkable, somehow delineated and distinct for example by street name themes, building styles, a shared green, playground and maybe a community centre!

**Woodhall Farm
(1974)**

**Adeyfield
(1950)**

**Bennetts End
(1951)**

**Grovehill
(1967)**

These were the new communities built in Hemel Hempstead during the New Town developments.

**Chaulden
(1953)**

**Highfield
(1959)**

**Gadebridge expanded
(1958)**

**Warners End
(1953)**

Nellie Black, about getting a minister:

He came to live in one of the new town houses, with his family, 3 boys and he came on the smallest stipend that he could manage on because we were having to pay it. He was a wonderful man, very much involved with the new town and he was visiting people when they came into the new houses. One lot of houses, hadn't, had barely been built, when the people came in and it was very, very bad weather, very cold and he went around the people he knew, borrowing electric fires, because there's no heating in the houses. One day I saw him cycling along Longlands with an electric fire on his handlebars, it was fun! But he never had a car, used to cycle all over.

Matching the availability of houses with services was not an easy task; for example, shops could not be opened until there were sufficient occupants to make them viable. People could trek into town, but most managed to buy their goods from the mobile shops, which regularly travelled round to the first settlements.

The Development Corporation was very keen to create a community spirit and encouraged community associations and local newsletters, such as the Adeyfield Argus and Bennett's End Bugle. The need for central meeting points was initially met by re-using the builders' huts. Garages and sheds were used as temporary churches, often shared by people of different denominations. Gardening clubs were set up and competitions were started for the best front or rear garden in each neighbourhood (see image).



The lovely garden with picturesque rockery and curved flower beds won first prize in the 'The Star' New Towns Garden Competition. Gazette 20 July 1956

New-comers to Hemel Hempstead were very interested in social interactions and the local Scouts and Guides groups became over-subscribed.

Scout Waiting List

At a re-union meeting of old Scouts and Guides, held at the Guide Hut, Boxmoor, on Friday evening, the fact was revealed by the District Commissioner of Guides, Mrs. M. Hazell, and the Scout Commissioner, Mr. C. Brooks, that never before had there been so much enthusiasm in the district for the Scouting movement as was being shown to-day. So much enthusiasm was there in fact that it had resulted in long lists of boys and girls waiting to enter the various companies and packs in and around Hemel Hempstead. Mr. Brooks explained that the reason for this was the fact that, whilst more and more young people wished to join the movement (one of the least expensive pastimes in existence), the Companies already in being were full to capacity, and no new ones could be formed owing to the lack of available leadership. This applied especially in the New Town area.

Gazette 27th April 1951

Activity

In the neighbourhoods people were meant to have important services and facilities within walking distance.

The first neighbourhood built was Adeyfield. From Adeyfield it is about 2 km to the town centre defined as the high street and the Marlowes. From Queens Square in Adeyfield it takes about 20 minutes to walk to the Marlowes shopping centre.

How far do you have to walk to go to:

- School
- Buy milk and other basic food
- Go to a park
- Go to the bus stop
- The library
- What other services can you walk to?

Using a compass, make a circle around your house or your school, and see where you can walk to in 10 minutes (1km) and in 20 min (2km).

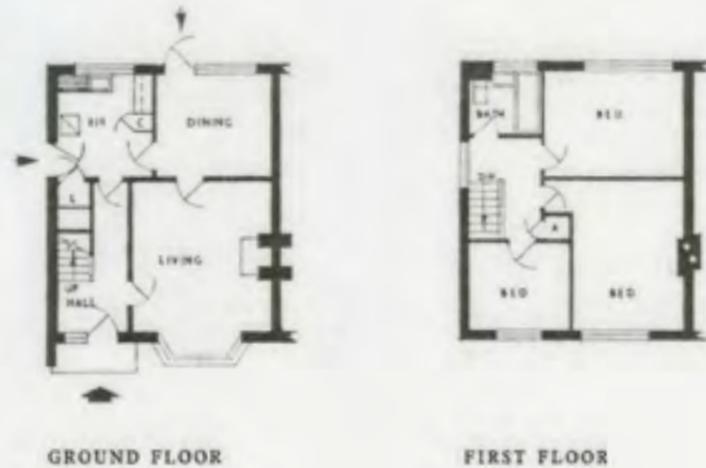
Building a house

House building got off to a slow start. Apart from a handful of prefabricated houses built in the 1940s, building only really got underway in 1951.

To get a house people had to find a job. For months they would commute from London until the houses were nearly ready. Then they were given a choice, and could pick one out of the three they were offered.

Interior of an "S" type house, where the living room and dining room are combined to make one large room.

Living room	12' 3" x 13' 6"	Bedroom 1	10' 0" x 13' 6"
Dining room	9' 3" x 9' 3"	Bedroom 2	12' 6" x 9' 3"
Kitchen	9' 9" x 9' 0"	Bedroom 3	9' 0" x 8' 0"



Floor plan of 'S' type house, used in New Park Drive, Adeyfield
DACHTHH1241b The Hemel Hempstead Local History and Museum Society



Interior shot of 'S' type house, used in New Park Drive, Adeyfield

The Architects Journal
CNT/HH/OIOR41 HALS

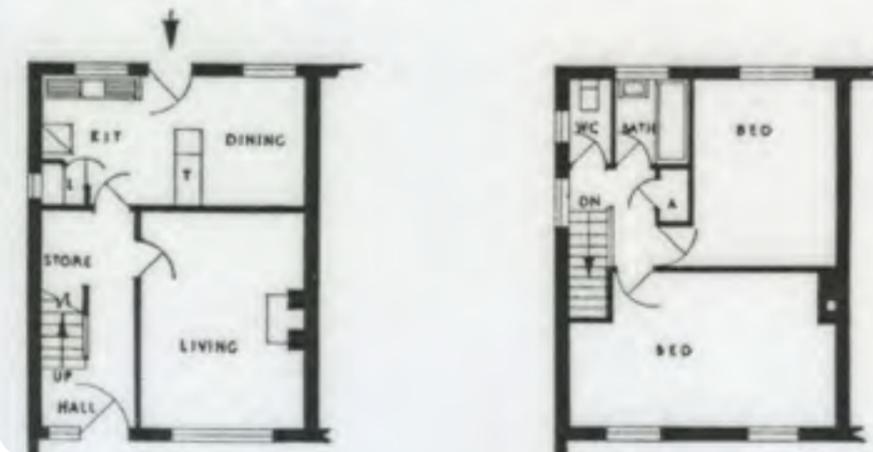


Exterior shot of houses on New Park Drive in Adeyfield, 1954

CNT/HH/OIO/R63 HALS

The ground floor of the U 2 has a dining recess off the kitchen. Upstairs there are two large bedrooms and a bathroom with a separate W.C.
Bedroom 1 extends across the entire frontage. There is a pram space under the stairs; a storshed and fuel store are provided in the garden.

Living room	14' 3" x 11' 3"	Bedroom 1	17' 6" x 10' 6"
Dining room	8' 6" x 7' 9"	Bedroom 2	12' 6" x 10' 6"
Kitchen	9' 6" x 8' 6"		



Floor Plan of a 'U2' type house, used in Briery Way, Adeyfield
DACHTHH1241 The Hemel Hempstead Local History and Museum Society

Valerie Weaving remembers her childhood home

When we moved to Masons Road, in Adeyfield. I was about three, it was a council house, mid terraced. It had a kitchen, dining room and a sitting room. Three bedrooms upstairs and a bathroom. A toilet downstairs, you could get to by going through, sort of like, an alleyway and also attached to it was a shed, which you could walk through. It had an open fire, I can remember the fire place in the living room was, sort of, beige-y coloured tiles and a nice garden. It was in quite a nice, quite a nice area I suppose.



Exterior shot of a 'U2' type house, used in Briery Way, Adeyfield

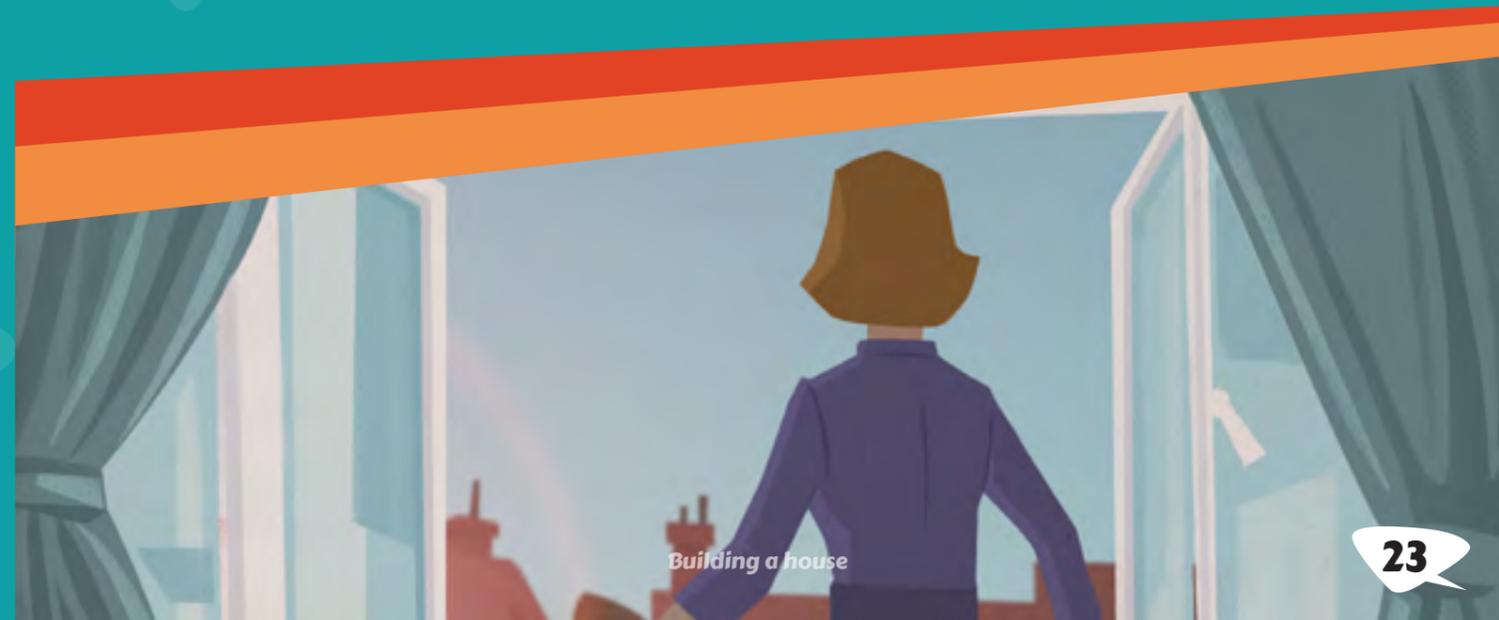
CNT/HH/O10/R44 HALS

Meg McCourt recalls the new houses built around her in Tile Kiln Lane

You had to go on a housing list to be entitled to a new town house, well to be entitled to a council house but to go into a new town house you had to be brought out with a, an industry didn't you, you see. The new town houses, because these were the first houses to be built, that was 1956, a month before my second child was born. The only other places here were the bungalows down the end there. Well they were built by Brocks Fireworks in Redbourn and they were built for the workers... These were built but very soon after they were built and the houses opposite were built. Now the houses opposite were not private houses, they were development houses and they were for higher paid workers because they built different housing for different grades of paid workers didn't they? So opposite they were for the higher paid workers but of course it changed once people were able to buy their own houses.

After I had been here a little while, I was asked to go on the committee of ladies. Told I would be picked up by a car and taken to an office that the new town Commission were using and we were told that they wanted a lady's point of view for the new houses in the new development. So we would meet just occasionally and they would tell us that they'd built so many houses in a certain area, sometimes we were taken along to see them, given our point of view about kitchens or what we felt could be improved. In Bennetts End particularly we were told that costs had gone up very suddenly and they wanted to reduce the cost because they wanted to cut something out of the houses without putting up the costs of the rent. So we were asked what we would feel we could cut out of the houses and we all felt that we didn't want the Marley tiles that were on the floor because several people coming into the new town found that these tiles were making life very difficult, it wasn't as easy to keep maintain the houses, they had to polish the floors. So I believe they, I don't know whether they did it in all the houses in Bennetts End, but I know they did it in some, cut them out and just had the (normal). Because, a lot of people were covering their floors anyhow, with either linoleum or carpet and things like that happened and we were, for a short time, we were called upon to do that, until things got busier and they were having other areas to open and they stopped requiring our advice after a while.

Nellie Black



The Queen's visit

Queen Elizabeth II visited Hemel Hempstead on 20th July 1952 to lay the foundation stone for St. Barnabus Church. The square in Adeyfield was re-named the Queen's Square in honour of her visit.

Well it was nice when the Queen's Square opened, I remember the Queen coming. She, it was St. Barnabas Church, wasn't it and I took my young son and we went over and we heard her speak in the Queen's Square. Then of course we all lined the streets as she went by, walked into Windmill and she went down there in her carriage and we all walked there to wave to her. Well it was quite, really good really, you know, it was something that had never happened, I don't think I'd seen any royalty really before. She spoke very well, very good, I can still picture it now

Una Taber

(S): When she came to lay the foundation stone in Queen's Square, I was there, walked round from Adeyfield Gardens to see her.

(T): Well, of course, at the time when she was going to come initially she was Elizabeth...

(T) and (S): She was a Princess...

(T): And then her father died.

(S): I was very impressed by her dress...

(T): I don't remember it...

(S): Well you didn't see it, you only saw pictures of her, I actually saw her.

(T): Oh well there you go...

Tony and Sonia Waterton



Queen Elizabeth visits Hemel Hempstead 20 July 1952

Hemel Hempstead Local History and Museum Society



Queen Elizabeth visits Hemel Hempstead 20 July 1952

Hemel Hempstead Local History and Museum Society

Activity

Writing

In the photos you can see some of the people who met the Queen when she came to Hemel Hempstead in 1952.

What would it be like if you were there to meet her, write a short story about how it would be to meet the Queen!

Drawing

Draw a picture of you meeting the queen.

I had a friend who talked to the Queen, and she asked my friend if she had any children. My friend said "Yes" and she said "What's his name" and she said "Phillip!". Of course it made the Queen laugh, so she was always proud of that moment.

Eileen Bull

Timeline of key events in Hemel Hempstead

1947

On 6th March Hemel Hempstead Development Corporation formally set up. By end of the 1947 Hemel Hempstead Protection Associations challenge to the legality of the proceeding was rejected by the High Court.

1948

The Hemel Hempstead Development Corporation arranged a grant of Arms with the motto "Majora, Uberiona, Pulchriora" which translates as "Greater, Richer, More Beautiful".

1949

On 23rd April first foundation stone was laid by Mayor of Hemel Hempstead Councillor Selden and work on the Adeyfield neighbourhood began.

1950

In Febuary first occupation on Homefield Road.

1951

Work to build the Bennetts End neighbourhood began.

1952

On 20th July foundation stone laid for St. Barnabus Church by Queen Elizabeth II. The square in Adeyfield was re-named the Queen's Square in honour of her visit.

On 24th December first public house opened in the new town called 'The New Venture'.



Dancing at Adeyfield Hall
CNT/HH/OIO/S28 HALS

1953

Work to build the Chaulden and Warners End neighbourhoods began and the Adeyfield and Bennetts End Community Halls were built.

1957

The Church of St. Alban was built in Warners End.



Moving in day, spring 56
CNT/HH/OIO/MISC12 HALS

1958

The Gadebridge neighbourhood was expanded and the Community Hall was built.

St. Benedict Anglican Church was built in Bennetts End.

Chaulden Community Hall was built.

1959

Work to build the Highfield neighbourhood began and St. Stephen Church of England Church was built in Chaulden.

1960

St. Pauls Church was built in Highfield and the Odeon Cinema was built.

1961

St. Peters Church was built in Gadebridge and the Marlowes Car Park was built.

DIY Oral History Interviews

Oral history is a good way of finding out more about people in your community or in your family. On the Talking New Towns website people have been interviewed about moving to the new towns in the post war area.

- Are there people you would like to interview for example your neighbours or your grandparents?
- What would you like to find out?
- Write some questions down:

When you are planning your interview, be aware that:

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Closed questions are good for getting factual information in the beginning of the interview, like 'What is your name?' or 'What school did you go to?'

Open questions are important to give people a chance to give you more information with lots of details. You can ask 'What was it like to start a new school when you moved here?'

If people give you a short answer and you would like them to elaborate and tell you more you can use prompts or follow on questions like:

'Did you make friends in your new school?' or 'How did that feel?' or simply 'Can you tell me a little more about that?'

Write your questions here:

1962

Dacorum College was built, the architect was John Bolton of Hertfordshire County Council Architects Department.

The community sculptures 'Boy with Cat' by John Mills, 'Reclining Figures' and 'Girl Combing Hair' both by Sidney Harpley were put into place.

1966

Dacorum Civic Centre and Magistrates Court were built, the architect for both was Clifford Culpin and Partners.

1967

Work to build the Grove Hill neighbourhood began as part of a second wave of new town building.

1977

Grove Hill Community Hall and Church of the Resurrection was built.

Work to build the Woodhall Farm neighbourhood continued.

1987

Woodhall Farm Community Hall was built.

Thanks to all of the volunteers, teachers and children who have helped put this education pack together.

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The Gazette is a key collection at The Dacorum Heritage Trust Ltd. The photographs and maps from the the Hemel Hempstead Local History and Museum Society are cared for by The Dacorum Heritage Trust Ltd.

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