

The First Hundred Families

Introduction

1. Successful town expansion requires as much skill and foresight as the building of a new town and needs to be planned as carefully. The provision of new homes is only the first of several services which go to unite the established residents and the incoming families into a single integrated community. These other services need to be planned for at the same time as the houses.

2. First impressions count for a good deal. Newcomers who find that the basic environmental amenities (made up foot-paths, a public telephone box, a rudimentary information service and a meeting place, etc.) are there when they arrive in their new neighbourhood will feel they are expected and made welcome.

3. Moreover, if the inevitable problems which arise in the first few months after moving to a new town can be handled promptly and with understanding the newcomers will settle down quickly and have a sense of being at home. The maximum possible meeting and intermingling of the old and new residents is a great help in this.

4. The greater variety of amenities which will be provided for the larger town should be to the advantage of all its inhabitants.

5. The families who move to expanding towns are almost without exception responsible citizens who move to better their conditions for the sake of their family. They are mostly young people with one or two small children. All the research undertaken so far shows this kind of pattern: the newcomers like their new homes and they would not go back, but many find it difficult to adjust quickly, not to miss the liveliness and interest of the large city, its comprehensiveness and its often well-organised services. It is perhaps not always appreciated that amenities which are acceptable to local people may not appear so adequate to newcomers, who may indeed be more apt at first to notice what is lacking rather than what is available. Newcomers are likely to feel uprooted. Many have not had a home of their own before. They may have lived with parents, and there has always been someone to lean on and turn to for advice. They have to furnish a home almost from scratch and they are besieged by hire-purchase salesmen. Rents may be higher than they have been accustomed to and wages may be lower. There may be no overtime work and no part-time work for women. Budgeting and managing are new and difficult tasks for the young and inexperienced housewife.

6. To get them over this settling-in period happily and quickly is essential to success. How can it be done? That is the subject of this paper, which draws upon experience gained in new and expanding towns. The community services and facilities set out below are those which are considered vital to the success of town expansion in its early stages, though all must be reviewed and some will need to be replaced as the town grows in accordance with the overall plan. The vital point is that they must be available as far as possible when the first tenants move in.

Administration

7. The most essential environmental services ought to be available by the time the first houses are occupied. If this is to be achieved imagination must be exercised in the formative stages of any sizeable expansion. One person should be designated by the local authority to be responsible for programming in advance and for making the initial arrangements. He must be brought into the picture and be able to start on the liaison work at the very earliest stage of planning a large-scale estate. He should be an officer of some standing, possessing foresight and energy, and able to rely on the co-operation of the officers of other departments and authorities in getting the necessary services in place on time.

8. With programmes that differ so much in scale, carried through by authorities differing so widely in size, staffing and financial resources; with schemes that rarely have the same pattern of co-operation between authorities—with all these variations, it would be impossible to make a general recommendation about the place which this officer should take in the set-up. The functions already referred to are clear enough to enable a sensible decision to be made in the local circumstances and for the early stages of the scheme. But in making the decision, the possible expansion of the work, once families begin to arrive, has to be borne in mind, for these additional functions can be numerous. They will include keeping an eye on the records of the age, sex and family composition of the newcomers, to help in the future programming, among other things, of schools, employment and second generation housing demand; encouragement of voluntary and commercial activities leading to a good variety of social and community facilities in the expanded town; progressing of the expansion of welfare and other public services to cope with the increased calls upon them; general action designed to encourage integration of the newcomers with the people already there; and, possibly, some dealings with the press, radio and television.

Arrivals Officer

9. It is also essential to designate an officer to act as the friend and adviser of the newcomers and to do what he or she can to help them settle in. They will have many questions to ask, and the Arrivals Officer, who may be the housing manager or the housing assistant responsible for the particular area, should be the kind of person who can help with personal problems as well as being able to supply information about the district. It has already been pointed out that there are often families standing on their own feet for the first time in their lives. If their confidence can be gained, advice can be given before difficulties become acute. The important thing is to establish a close link with the tenants in their own homes when they arrive.

10. The Arrivals Officer may in fact make his first contact with a family before they have made up their mind to move. Prospective tenants should be encouraged to visit the town to have a look around or, if a firm is thinking of establishing itself in the town, arrangements should be made for the work-people to have a conducted tour. These tours may have to take place at the weekend and arrangements should always be made to ensure that various types of houses are open for inspection and suitable staff are available to answer questions about educational and other facilities. If the arrangements are efficient and carried out in a friendly way, an atmosphere of goodwill can be created right from the start.

11. Subsequently the Arrivals Officer is the person to show residents their new homes, tell them where to find the various services, explain the various phases of the development and be regularly available for some months afterwards. (People do not mind waiting a reasonable time for a service provided they know when they are going to get it.) The Arrivals Officer who keeps in touch with the tenants can deal with problems as they arise and put tenants in touch with other services should they require them.

12. In large town expansion schemes, in addition to the Arrivals Officer, it is very desirable that there should be a Social Development Officer similar to the appointments which have been made so successfully in some of the new towns.

Information Booklet

13. New residents need a tenants' handbook or equivalent, which will give detailed information not only on the usual things such as the house, use of appliances, care of equipment, etc.; the garden, suitable plants, erection of sheds, etc.; but also:

- (i) a map of the expansion proposals (with their timing if possible);
- (ii) addresses and times of opening of all social services;
- (iii) particulars of churches, voluntary organisations, cultural and social activities;
- (iv) information about hospital services, emergency arrangements, and names and addresses of local doctors;
- (v) general information: bus services, refuse disposal, early closing day, etc.

14. They should also be given a copy of the town guide. Many expanding towns have features of historical and social interest and new residents will want to know about the district to which they have come.

15. Up to date information should be prominently displayed on a notice board at the information centre. This is of greater value than a supply of leaflets to individual householders because it is simpler to keep up to date.

Community Office

16. Unless the new housing development is very near the town centre, or contiguous to an area already served by a welfare clinic, doctors and available meeting places, temporary accommodation should be provided for these services in the early stages.

17. This may be done in various ways. Private houses, garages and temporary structures have all been used successfully in different places, but experience has shown that a definite advantage is gained if a temporary building is erected with the first housing contract. This can serve as an office for the Arrivals Officer and workers such as the Health Visitor. The building can also provide two small rooms which could be locked, with facilities for use by a nurse or doctor. A small general meeting-room would be invaluable for a variety of purposes; in addition to being available for tenants' meetings and other social activities it could be used at other times as a waiting-room for the welfare clinic or the doctor's surgery. Facilities for tea-making, storage and a pram shelter should be incorporated.

18. There are now attractive portable buildings on the market which rest on paving stones and which incorporate plumbing and other services when they are erected. A building with minimum facilities of this kind could be erected for £2-3,000. Sections could be added as needed and the whole structure taken to a different site in the same area, or to a new development somewhere else as and when required.

19. Such a building can be used by different people and groups and arrangements for what is sometimes described as joint usage have to be worked out. One person usually has to be responsible for the management of the building and a sensible estimate of cost apportioned to the different users. The management of the building might be in the hands of the Arrivals Officer.

20. The value of such a building to the new community and to those whose task it is to serve them will be very great. It will show the newcomers, perhaps more clearly than anything else, the efforts the authority is making to bring them into the local community.

21. In providing for a particular need the importance of taking an overall view of the provision for community buildings generally should not be lost sight of. No expanding town would want to finish up with a proliferation of very small halls and a lack of a suitably sited hall of any decent size.

Local Transport

22. One of the most difficult services to provide in the early stages of development is adequate transport, because bus companies will rarely run services until they are economic. If the council can indicate how large a service is required, that so many children will go on a given route to a school, and that so many work-people will need to travel to the town centre or to a factory area, this gives operators a chance to decide how soon a licence should be sought.

23. Licences are strictly defined as to terminal and pick-up points as well as routes. In consequence discussions with the local Traffic Commissioner and the operators ought to take place before the detailed lay-out of an estate has been decided so that lay-bys and turn-rounds can be provided in suitable positions.

General Shop

24. The first residents may arrive before it is convenient (from the planning point of view) to build the local shops and before the trader finds it worthwhile to open. Temporary expedients are possible: for example, a house can be let as a shop temporarily, the front room being the shop and the owner himself living in the rest of the house and later transferring the business to permanent accommodation. There have also been experiments where a group of garages have been made into temporary shops and let to established traders in the town. In some cases shops have been let at a sympathetic rent, which is gradually increased as trade expands. Travelling shops have their place but experience has shown that the travelling shop may make it very difficult for the permanent trader to become established. Nor are they as convenient for the housewife, who may be out when they are in her road.

25. The final layout should provide for "corner shops" which, properly sited, have been shown to give a good return. If one can be built early on, it can help considerably. The corner shop is not only an amenity but also an informal meeting place where women get to know one another. Some shopkeepers by their friendliness and efficient service contribute a great deal to the social development of the area.

Post Office Facilities

26. The public telephone box gives a sense of security to the mother of a family who knows nobody when she first moves and who feels cut off from relatives and friends. It enables her to get in touch with friends and to know that in an emergency she can phone the doctor, midwife, or her husband at work. Arrangements have to be made so that the telephone box is in place immediately the first houses are occupied. In emergency it is sometimes possible to make arrangements for the telephone belonging to the Clerk of Works on the site to be used. Many residents are anxious to have a telephone and arrangements with the Post Office should be made at the initial planning stage.

27. The Post Office like to lay the cables before the road is made and, since they regard the provision of public telephone boxes as a social service, they are willing to consider variations from the usual standard of $\frac{1}{4}$ -mile distances between boxes in urban areas. The Post Office favour sub-post offices as part of a shop in the early stages of development but an approach should be made to the Head Postmaster in the area, as he is responsible for the appointment of sub-postmasters.

Schools

28. The education authority need to know well in advance the number of new school places that will be required. An authority who have not had experience of new towns or town expansion may find it hard to believe that there will be such a large number of children in the expanding town. Between a quarter and one-third of the incoming population is likely to consist of children under 10 years of age. Unless the full impact of so many children is realised, and provision made as well for further family growth, schools will be overcrowded to the detriment of the local children as well as the newcomers and

many of the latter may also have distances to travel which are very long by city standards. It helps a great deal if newcomers can be told what the education plans are and when they are likely to be implemented. Potential educational advantages weigh heavily with the newcomers. Facilities for advanced courses in the secondary schools will be considered to be very important.

Doctor's Surgery

29. Until there is a resident doctor on the estate with his own surgery, the community office with a special room for the doctor could be used once or twice a week for this purpose. Or perhaps he might have temporary surgery accommodation in the house allocated to the district nurse or midwife. Discussions with the local Health Executive Council should go on well in advance of the new development.

Welfare Clinic

30. A local clinic is very desirable and mothers much appreciate not having to travel far with young children to the clinic; a thing which often happens in the early stages of new housing. The community office can be used for this purpose with a small lock-up room for the exclusive use of the clinic, the general meeting-room forming a pleasant and comfortable place for women to have a cup of tea and talk to one another while they wait for attention. Again, arrangements have to be made well in advance. An increase in the number of Health Visitors and midwives will be required in large developments and housing accommodation should be reserved for them.

31. At the same time as initial arrangements are being made for a welfare clinic in the new housing area, and additional personnel in the health services, discussions should go on with the local hospital board about the number of hospital beds which are likely to be needed as a result of the increase in population.

Meeting-room

32. Until some permanent provision of a local community building can be made, voluntary organisations should be able to use the small meeting-room in the community office. This would be suitable for a nursery play group organised perhaps by the mothers themselves in the mornings, a women's group in the afternoon, a meeting of the men interested in gardening, a small Sunday school or church service, a local residents' committee, or a welcome from the mayor or local council.

Layout and Street Lighting

33. There should be made-up paths and roads to a bus route, the local shops and the community office as soon as possible. Few things make for more dissatisfaction in early weeks of residence than un-made footpaths. It is now well recognised that the best way to preserve the appearance of the layout of new housing is to landscape at the same time as the internal work on the houses is being finished, so that the new residents come in to a tidy and attractive environment. Children in particular respect amenities that are already there when they arrive, but if they have played about in mud and rubble for several months, new patterns of behaviour will be hard to establish.

34. The allocation of sufficient play space in the overall layout is important, particularly as there will be so many children. It would be advisable to provide some facilities adjacent to the temporary community building, such as an embedded tree-trunk to climb on, and any other of the simple facilities which young children enjoy, and with seats for mothers. Just as important, however, is a place in which boys are allowed to kick a ball about and areas where children may play freely. If one of the permanent play areas does not fall within the first section of the development, some temporary areas should be allocated.

Financial Responsibilities

35. The services and amenities needed on a new housing estate involve both town and county councils, although the immediate tasks, and the appointment of the Arrivals Officer, fall upon the town. The growth of the town will bring advantages to all its inhabitants and the amenities provided will be of benefit to both established and incoming residents: both town and county council will therefore wish provision to be made in the best way possible. The cost will fall on these authorities since no central funds are available. The county council, because of its greater financial resources and larger staffs, can be of great assistance to the town and can often make the difference between a scheme becoming bogged down financially or gathering momentum and successfully passing through the initial period when finances are strained. The county council can also act as a clearing-house for the exchange of information and experience.

General

36. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the impression made on the first families who move to a new area is of prime importance. Their attitude has a disproportionate effect, either for good or ill, on all the succeeding groups of newcomers. The relatively high cost per family of the initial amenities and the salary of the Arrivals Officer should be regarded as an investment which is likely to pay high dividends through the avoidance of discontent and friction while the community is settling down in its new environment.

Conclusion

37. Authorities undertaking town expansion keep in close contact with each other and there is a good deal of sharing of experience. This report gives guidance on some of the lesser, though vitally important, matters concerned with town expansion. No doubt to some extent much that has been written here has already passed into current thinking. None of it will be new to everyone; but some of it may be new, or a reminder, to enough people to make the report of value.

SUMMARY OF BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE FIRST RESIDENTS

1. The first, and most difficult, duty of the expanding authority is to appoint a person to be responsible for the general oversight and co-ordination of all services from the outset.
2. An Arrivals Officer, who might be the housing manager or one of his staff, known to all newcomers as being there to advise and assist them, should be available to smooth the way of the first new residents.
3. Up-to-date information on the services available in the area should be provided.
4. A meeting-place of some kind, which can provide the basic social service needs, is essential. This should be large enough to house the arrivals office, the welfare clinic, and a tenants' meeting room (not necessarily all at the same time).
5. Bus services must be planned well in advance of the occupation of the estate, if even a skeleton service is to be available when required.
6. Many of the housewives will have young children and should not have to face a long journey to do their normal housekeeping shopping. The small corner shop has proved to be invaluable in these circumstances.
7. Local postal officials will co-operate with local authorities in the matter of public telephone boxes and the provision of sub-post offices. These latter are of great importance because of payments of pensions and family allowances.
8. Local Education Authorities must be warned in the planning stages of the probable number of the incoming child population.
9. The Local Health Authority should be told of the ultimate size of the new estate when this is planned and consulted about temporary provision for a doctor's surgery, the services of a district nurse or midwife and the minimum accommodation they will need for a welfare clinic.
10. Making-up of essential footpaths between occupied dwellings and the shops, community building and bus stops should be completed before the first tenants arrive.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT

NOTE ON POPULATION COMPOSITION

1. People moving to the earlier new towns consisted predominantly of young married couples with young children. Approximately half were between 20 and 40 years old compared with about 27 per cent for England and Wales. Children under 10 years of age formed about a quarter compared with only 15 per cent for England and Wales. Only a small proportion of the newcomers were in the 15-19 age-group or in the over-45 age-groups. A structure of this kind produced the following features:—

- (i) A large school population for the first 10 to 15 years. During the first ten years there was a relatively small proportion of teenagers.
- (ii) After 10-15 years a large volume of school-leavers seeking employment at a time when retirement would have had little effect on the current population of working age; in effect, there would be a second peak of demand for employment.
- (iii) In the 15-20 year period there would be an increasing number of second generation households being formed and requiring housing.

2. With regard to town development schemes there is far less demographic information available to indicate the probable pattern of development. It had been assumed that experience would prove similar to that of the London new towns. However, the information that is available suggests that this may not be so and that there may be significant differences. Recent analyses of the household structure of immigrants to expanded towns indicate, at least in the early years of a town development scheme, an even more youthful population than that experienced by the new towns at a comparable stage of development:—

- (i) There is generally an even higher proportion of children under 10 years of age, about one-third of the incoming population compared with about one-quarter in the case of the new towns.
- (ii) The 15-19 age group and the over-45 age groups are likely to form initially an even smaller proportion than in the new towns.
- (iii) It is possible that between two-thirds and three-quarters of the total incoming population will be under 30 years of age.
- (iv) The average household size tends, certainly in the initial years of a town development scheme, to be larger than the earlier new towns experienced. Average household size at time of arrival in the new towns ranged between 3·0 and 3·2 persons, tending to decrease in later years. In recent town development schemes the first immigrants have had an average household size of 3·5 persons or more.

(v) There is generally a higher proportion of 3, 4 and 5 person households, whereas 80 per cent of new town immigrants consisted of 2, 3 and 4 person households.

3. Whether the composition of later families under town development schemes will conform more to the pattern of the new towns remains to be seen, but reception authorities should be aware of the possible composition of the earlier families to come to their towns.

4. A population of this young age-composition may be expected to give rise to a high rate of natural increase for a number of years. Not only will there be a large child population initially but a continuing high birth-rate may be expected for some time afterwards. Considerable pressure on school accommodation may be expected. Moreover, since more children have already been born to incoming parents than was the case in the new towns, the 'peak' of school-leavers will occur earlier and on a relatively larger scale. Similarly, second-generation family formation may be expected to occur a few years in advance of new town experience.

5. These points are put forward as an indication of some of the factors that should be taken into account in the early planning stages of town development schemes: the high proportion of young children from the outset, with consequential educational, welfare and recreational needs, young mothers with need for shops, schools, and welfare services at hand. In later years the needs of large numbers of young people for education, recreation and employment will have to be anticipated.

NOTES ON THE COST OF TEMPORARY
BUILDINGS FOR COMMUNAL PURPOSES

It may be expected that a temporary building suitable for communal use could be erected within the price range 40-50 shillings per square foot when based on an area of some 1,000-1,500 square feet.

Most types of timber and concrete buildings with some variety of roof and wall finishes would come within this range provided that manufacturers' standard spans and bay widths were adhered to.

The prices given are averaged over the broad range of building types at present commercially available and are given here as a guide only and not as a criterion.

Since the cost of providing such items as foundations and services will vary the price range given would normally exclude external works as well as fees and other incidentals. It would, however, normally include (particularly at the higher end of the range) a reasonable provision of sanitary fittings, heating and lighting.

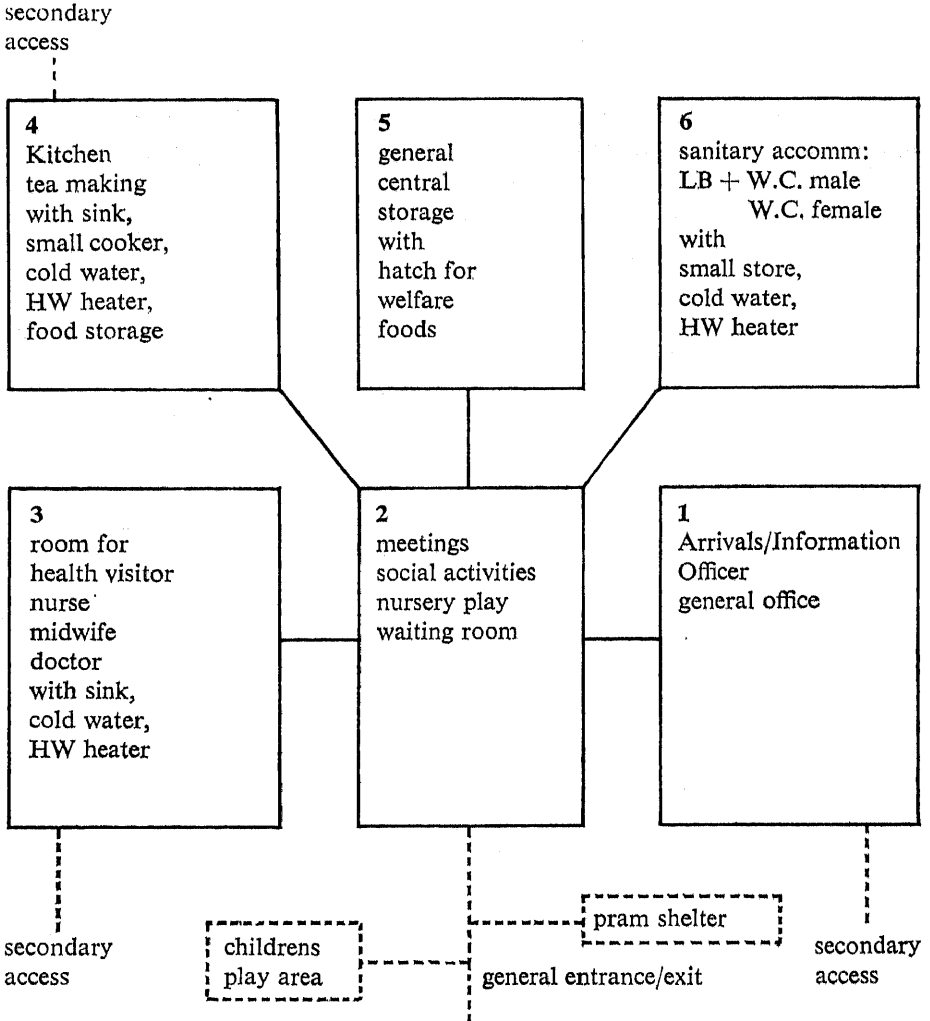
When it is envisaged that the building will be erected and demounted a number of times during its lifetime it is advisable to aim for the more substantial specification provided at the higher end of the price range.

Some useful data relating to requirements of clinical rooms is given in the Ministry of Health Local Authority Building Note No. 3 "Local Health Authority Clinics" (HMSO 1962) and similar information on club rooms can be found in the Ministry of Education Building Bulletin No. 20, "Youth Service Buildings" (HMSO 1961).

Councils may find it worth while to approach local producers for this type of building, so as not to incur unnecessary transport costs.

Temporary Building for Communal Purposes

Suggested Diagrammatic Layout of Accommodation



Areas Guide

room	area
1	100- 150 sq. ft.
2	300- 400 sq. ft.
3	150- 200 sq. ft.
4	60- 100 sq. ft.
5	80- 100 sq. ft.
6	100- 150 sq. ft.
totals	790-1100 sq. ft.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES IN EXPANDING TOWNS

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The first hundred families

A guide to the community services and facilities
which should be available for the first
families arriving in an expanding town

*Prepared by a study group of four members of
the Central Housing Advisory Committee*

LONDON

HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE: 1965

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Preface

The services and facilities dealt with in this report are the minimum needed in the first stage of the development to help newcomers to settle down and feel that they are part of an established community. Some of the suggestions made are for merely temporary devices, to be replaced and supplemented as the community grows, and accordingly all these services ought to be reviewed from time to time to make sure they are still adequate to serve the needs of the larger community. The report does not take account of the needs of employment and industry, nor does it deal with the more sophisticated services, such as a variety of shops, a community centre, sports ground and church premises, which will need to be planned for the fully developed community.

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