

Local impact

**A community placeshaping
toolkit for housing providers**



PlaceShapers
Together we help communities thrive

 **Greatwell**
Homes

“All of your teams were so good, and always helpful. Please share my feedback with whoever you want... sometimes people never get a thank you or a compliment, as we just assume ‘it’s your job’. But I really appreciate everyone’s hard work.”

Sarah, Greatwell Homes resident following energy efficiency upgrades to her home

“Partnership working is vital in building confidence within our community. Working together helps us to create safer neighbourhoods by reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, and imposing positive enforcement.”

PC Gemma Cairns, Northamptonshire Police

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This toolkit reflects the practical experience of **Greatwell Homes** – a community-focused **PlaceShapers** housing association based in Northamptonshire. We own and manage more than 5,000 homes for rent and shared ownership, aiming to deliver great communities where people live well.

In 2022, we set out to measure how well we fulfil our role as a PlaceShaper housing association, and the social value this generates. From this, we’ve developed a five-step toolkit, which we hope will help other registered providers to achieve

and assess their own local impact. The measures we use and stories we tell about placeshaping have to be ones that residents, local partners and regulators can truly see, feel and understand.

The quotes from residents, partners and others included here demonstrate the real-world benefits of placeshaping and how a place-based approach opens up new opportunities for collaboration.

Foreword

At the heart of every thriving community lies more than just bricks and mortar. It's the people, the opportunities and the sense of belonging that truly shape a place.

Housing associations have long understood this, stepping beyond their traditional role as landlords to deliver positive social, economic and physical change. This is what we call placeshaping – building not just homes, but resilient and connected communities.

As this important role continues to evolve, so too does the need to better understand and evidence the difference we're making. How do we capture the true value of effectively tackling anti-social behaviour, a community-led event or a support programme for local employment? How can we track the ripples of these efforts over time, and use this knowledge to shape even more effective initiatives in the future?

Housing providers face a range of challenges that mean they're having to make difficult decisions about what to prioritise. So they must be able to robustly evidence the impact of their wider work.

Demonstrating the outcomes of community investment, neighbourhood improvements and partnership initiatives ensures that resources are targeted effectively, in ways that respond to local need. It also helps organisations be more transparent and accountable to their customers, communities and partners.

This toolkit helps housing providers to plan, measure, evaluate and articulate the impact of their placeshaping activities. It's built on the proven and practical experience of Greatwell Homes in doing just that – from defining places and engaging with local people, through to measuring and reporting success.

By adopting a more consistent, evidence-led approach to measuring impact, housing organisations can play an even stronger role in shaping more resilient places where people want to live. It also helps to demonstrate and validate the critical contribution played by social housing providers.



Catherine Ryder
chief executive, PlaceShapers

Step one: defining 'place'

Before we can deliver and truly assess the impact of placeshaping as social housing professionals, we need to address a fundamental question: **what do we mean by 'place'?**

'Place' isn't just a dot on a map. A successful, flourishing place is somewhere people feel safe, connected and at home. But it's a tricky concept to pin down. As providers of social housing, we have many ideas of 'place'. These could be estates, housing management patches or more technical definitions like **Lower layer Super Output Areas**. But how meaningful are these for residents?

For some people, 'place' might be their street or immediate neighbourhood. For others, it could be an entire city, town, borough or village, or a cultural or socio-economic community that transcends physical limits and geography.

So, before we set about placeshaping and seeking to measure its effectiveness, we must first define 'place' in a way that makes sense to both us as providers and to the people who live there.

Things to consider

1. How can and should we report performance?

- Break it down by geography?
- Focus on different demographic groups?
- What makes most sense for our organisation, residents and partners?

2. What scale is practical?

- For larger housing providers working across multiple regions, defining 'place' too locally could create an overwhelming amount of data and difficulties in making comparisons.
- Smaller providers may find a more localised approach more logical and manageable.
- We need to balance getting a meaningful, granular view of local impact and the practicality of collecting and reporting data.

3. Does our definition align with how residents and others see 'place'?

- Just because a definition works for us doesn't mean it works for local people and partners. It's crucial to consult and engage with residents and other stakeholders to agree on a shared understanding.

Lessons from practice: Greatwell Homes



Greatwell Homes initially defined 'place' in very local terms – six areas where we have a high concentration of homes. We agreed 22 performance measures with residents but later found that splitting all of these measures across six places (132 different data sets) was far too complex to manage effectively.

It also meant that the amount of data coming from different places could vary considerably. For example, we might have lots of data and activity coming in from larger housing estates, but rural communities with smaller numbers of homes would yield lower rates of response making data less reliable to draw conclusions from.

After further discussions with residents, we opted for a broader approach, using local council boundaries instead. This brought the number of 'places' down from six estates to two local authorities, which kept the data meaningful for residents without becoming overwhelming for staff.

An academic view



A report by the Dr Gareth Young from University of Sheffield and Dr Sarah Alden from Alden Social Research, *Realising the Potential of Housing Associations in Places and Communities*, notes that there is no single definition of what it means to work in a place-based way. For many organisations, the term reflects a set of values as much as a specific delivery model - including local responsiveness, trust, relationships and a commitment to working with communities rather than doing things to them.

The report defines place-based approaches as seeking to:

“Improve outcomes by aligning housing, health, infrastructure and economic support around the specific needs, assets and priorities of local communities. They depend on local insight, joined-up systems, and the flexibility to design solutions that reflect the diversity of places and the people who live in them.”

Practical steps to defining 'place'



1. **Map out local communities** – consider geographical, cultural, and economic factors.
2. **Engage with residents** – what do people say makes somewhere feel like 'home'?
3. **Test different definitions** – local authority/ward boundaries or something more flexible?
4. **Ensure data is compatible and collectable** – can we track and report performance effectively using our chosen definition?
5. **Review and adapt** – what works now may need tweaking later; stay open to change.

The bigger picture – going beyond bricks and mortar

In 2007, the **Lyons Inquiry** 'Placeshaping: a shared ambition for the future of local government', highlighted the need for social housing to be about more than just bricks and mortar. It called for housing providers to play an active, local role in creating thriving, sustainable communities.

"Trust is the crucial, but perhaps often understated, factor that is necessary for effective placeshaping. Local institutions and representatives tend to be more trusted than national institutions."

Sir Michael Lyons

More recently, the **regulatory standards** have emphasised the need for registered providers to work cooperatively with residents and local partners to ensure the safety and social, environmental and economic wellbeing of areas where they provide homes. Annual monitoring of this is built in via **Tenant Satisfaction Measure TP11**, which measures residents' views on how

their landlord makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood. All of this contributes towards the government's **Plan for Change** mission of national renewal.

Defining 'place' is the first step towards this goal. If we don't understand the communities we work in, how can we shape them for the better?



Residents and colleagues at the opening of the communal garden at Earls Barton independent living scheme

Step two: engaging with residents

Having defined 'place', the next step is to engage effectively with the people who live there. Placeshaping is about **partnership**, so the way we engage with residents has a direct impact on the success of our work.

The key is to build and maintain 'adult-to-adult' relationships. This concept comes from **Transactional Analysis**, a socio-psychological model that explains how people communicate. It identifies three states that people and organisations can adopt when interacting with others:

- **Parent** – controlling, instructing or nurturing from a position of authority
- **Adult** – engaging rationally, collaboratively and respectfully
- **Child** – responding emotionally, whether in a compliant or rebellious way.

In social housing, we are most effective when we behave and communicate in an adult-to-adult way – working with residents as equal partners, rather than taking a dominant, parental stance.

Past social housing practice has sometimes reflected more parent-child dynamics, where providers took on an instructive or directive role, causing residents to either comply passively or push back with frustration. This approach reinforced power imbalances and social housing stigma. Through adult-to-adult conversations, we can build mutual respect, trust and real collaboration.

Practical steps for engagement



1. **Listen actively** – engage residents in meaningful discussions, not just 'tick-box' consultation.
2. **Avoid jargon and directives** – speak plainly and avoid patronising or bureaucratic language.
3. **Acknowledge lived experience** – residents are the experts in their own communities, who can offer unique and invaluable insights.
4. **Co-create initiatives** – involve residents in shaping ideas from the start; don't just present pre-formed plans.
5. **Check our tone and approach** – are we communicating as equals, or slipping into a parental role?

How to apply this to placeshaping

PlaceShapers' 2022 report '**Stay local, go far**' identifies four key kinds of placeshaping, through which housing associations can evidence their community impact. Adult-to-adult engagement is an essential part of all four types:



Physical – residents should have an equal voice in shaping housing and infrastructure improvements



Social – encouraging civic pride means supporting, not instructing, community initiatives



Economic – job opportunities and skills training should be developed in collaboration with local people



Democratic – empowering residents to engage in decision-making, not just informing them of choices made.

Continuing to define and evidence these different kinds of placeshaping is the focus of an **ongoing learning programme**.

Lessons from practice: Greatwell Homes



Greatwell Homes used Transactional Analysis to guide its placeshaping conversations. Previously, we framed engagement around 'educating' residents about housing – an unconscious and unhelpful parent-child dynamic. Shifting our approach to adult-to-adult conversations changed everything:

- Residents felt more respected and valued, leading to greater participation.
- Trust increased, making difficult conversations (for example, about service changes) easier.
- Decisions were more sustainable, as they reflected residents' genuine priorities.

Using Transactional Analysis to make sure we work with residents as genuine partners helped to deliver a significant increase in the Tenant Satisfaction Measure for how people feel they are treated fairly and with respect (TP08). This rose by 5.2% between 2023/24 and 2024/25.



The bigger picture – working with residents as friendly equals, and challenging stigma

Social housing is about shaping places that people are proud to call home. By avoiding doing things ‘to’ residents and instead working with them, we unlock people’s strengths and build more resilient communities.

The **Grenfell Tower fire** and the **death of Awaab Ishak** because of damp and mould in

his family’s home are stark reminders of what can happen if residents’ views are marginalised or ignored. They’re also examples of how social housing stigma affects people’s lives. Respecting customers’ views and engaging respectfully with local communities are powerful ways to challenge misconceptions and unfairness.

“The team was compassionate and gracious. They made no judgement when all three of my children were eating in the garden with their headphones on. No expectations were made if they didn’t interact, which is common for children of neurodiversity. You were adaptable and understanding, and this was very much appreciated.”

Kay, Greatwell Homes resident after recladding and insulation work to her home



Step three: listening to the resident voice

Once we've built strong, adult-to-adult relationships with residents, it's time to make sure we're actually listening to what people say.

Placeshaping isn't just about setting priorities from an organisational perspective; it's about shaping communities with the people who live in them. Residents know their neighbourhoods better than anyone. They experience the day-to-day reality of local life, so can offer insights that no strategy or data can ever capture.

Listening isn't just about hearing people's voices and views; it's about acting on what we learn. If we invite residents to share their views but fail to follow through, we risk losing trust and engagement altogether.



Making engagement meaningful

The **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** sets clear expectations for how housing providers should engage with residents:

- 2.2.1: Registered providers must give tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlord's strategies, policies and services. This includes in relation to the neighbourhood where applicable.
- 2.2.5: Registered providers, working with tenants, must regularly consider ways to improve and tailor their approach to delivering landlord services including tenant engagement. They must implement changes as appropriate to ensure services deliver the intended aims.

Placeshaping consultation can help to evidence how we're meeting these standards, showing that residents' voices are not only heard, but actively shape decisions and services.

“Residents asked Greatwell Homes to seek TPAS accreditation. This offers an independent review of our work by external experts, ensuring that we’re delivering on our promises. The feedback helps us keep improving, so we can continue making Greatwell Homes a place where tenants feel safe, happy, and proud to live.”

Claire Waples, vice-chair of Greatwell Homes’ Customer Assembly,
talking about the benefits of **TPAS’s landlord accreditation**

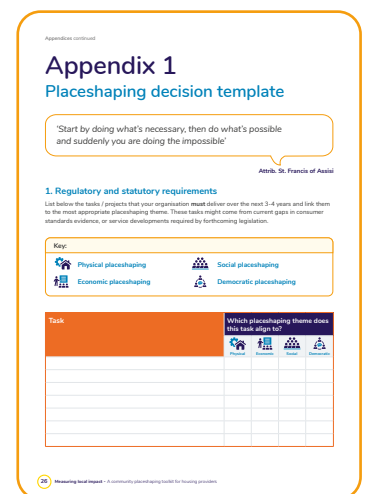
How to capture residents’ views

Before consulting with residents, it may be useful to create a ‘long-list’ of potential placeshaping activities. Speak to service leads across the organisation to define:

- **Business priorities for the next two to three years**
- **Any changes on the regulatory/statutory horizon that we will need to deliver against** (for example, **Awaab’s Law** or the **updated Decent Homes Standard**)
- **Work with partners across the four categories of placeshaping**
- **Action to meet or exceed the consumer standards**
- **Residents’ priorities for the future**
- **Trends in Tenant Satisfaction Measures and complaints data.**

These elements will form the long list of suggestions to share with residents, so it’s important to choose things that are both affordable and deliverable. This will minimise the risk of making commitments that cannot be delivered. The decision-making template in **Appendix 1** (page 26) will help organisations to generate ideas and possibilities.

Next, we need to refine the long list by asking residents what matters most to them. To do this well:



- 1. Make it easy to take part** – use both digital surveys and tools as well as face-to-face conversations, to reach as many people as possible
- 2. Use multiple channels** – online, in-person, phone, text – one size doesn’t fit all
- 3. Empower service teams** – resident-facing colleagues can capture feedback in real time through their day-to-day contacts
- 4. Build in feedback** – so that residents can see how their input shapes decisions and outcomes
- 5. Close the loop** – keep residents updated on what’s happened because of their input.

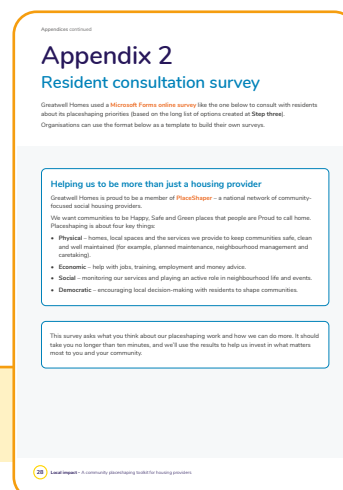
Lessons from practice: Greatwell Homes



Greatwell Homes streamlined its engagement by using Microsoft Forms for digital consultation. This allowed us to reach a wide audience quickly, while also enabling staff to record resident feedback during phone calls. Training customer service teams to gather insight through everyday interactions made hearing and listening to the customer voice an integral part of service delivery.

This approach enabled us to maximise the number of participants' views we recorded. Using telephone surveys alongside digital engagement reduced the risk of excluding residents without access to the internet.

Appendix 2 (page 28) shows a template survey to support consultation with residents.



“Groundwork helps communities to enjoy green spaces and realise the huge benefits this brings for wellbeing, nature and the environment. Working with Greatwell Homes and local communities, we have co-produced the design, installation and build of green spaces, and gained valuable ideas to support their ongoing, positive use.”

Kate Williams, Executive Director,
Groundwork Northamptonshire



The bigger picture – aligning with the Regulator’s Consumer Standards

Resident and community engagement must be more than a token effort; it should be central to how housing providers operate. By embedding the resident voice into placeshaping, we can create communities that truly reflect the people who live there and demonstrate meaningful opportunities for residents to influence services.



“You’ve provided so many children with their first set of wheels. Wesley from Brightwayz is now a friend of the school – he has been lovely with all the children, in particular, one very streetwise young lad who was trying to change his inner tube with a screwdriver. Wesley gave him a small tool set and taught him how to keep his beloved bike in good working order.

“The children are beaming. We couldn’t have facilitated this without your support. You are angels on wheels!”

Lucy Deakin, Headteacher at Croyland Primary School in Northamptonshire talking about a **partnership scheme to refurbish and repair children’s bikes**.

Step four: measuring success

So we've engaged with residents and agreed what a flourishing 'place' looks like. The next challenge is to decide how we can quantify success and prove that we're shaping places people are proud to call home.

This calls for a mix of **quantitative and qualitative** approaches. Consumer regulation focuses on positive outcomes for residents, so placeshaping measures should reflect real-life improvements, not just data points.



Key questions to guide measures

1. **Physical** – how are we improving local housing, infrastructure and green spaces? Are there clear indicators of progress, such as improved energy efficiency, satisfaction with repairs or major refurbishments and environmental gains?
2. **Economic** – what role do we play in improving financial resilience? What initiatives do we deliver that support this and how do we measure their success?
3. **Social** – how do we foster civic pride and community activity? Are there initiatives to help residents feel more connected to their neighbourhoods?
4. **Tenant Satisfaction Measures** – how do surveys and data collection link to placeshaping activities? For example, could TP12 (satisfaction with how landlords handle anti-social behaviour) help to measure the impact of physical placeshaping?
5. **Existing performance information** – what regularly collected data could be relevant? For example, satisfaction with repairs and replacements, or progress against energy efficiency targets?
6. **Extra measurement** – could other data and feedback be captured? For example, targets for diversionary activities, such as youth engagement programmes, community events and crime prevention initiatives?

Making it work

To measure success in a meaningful way, we must:

- **Pull the chosen measures together into a coherent whole** – something that tells the full story about local impact and social value
- **Be transparent** – sharing findings with residents to show what progress is being made
- **Set realistic targets** – focusing on measures that are necessary, relevant and achievable
- **Adapt as needed** – not every measure will work perfectly; so be prepared to refine in the light of experience.

HACT (Housing Association Charitable Trust) UK Social Value Banks

Social value reporting is one of the most effective ways to demonstrate the broader impact of placeshaping. The **HACT UK Social Value Banks** provide a framework to measure the positive social impact of housing services and community initiatives, and express this in monetary terms. It's an approach that complements the philosophy and practice of placeshaping particularly well.

Incorporating social value into reporting helps to:

- **Quantify impact** – expressing improvements in money equivalents (for example, the financial benefit of employment or wellbeing initiatives)
- **Support funding applications** – strengthening bids by demonstrating tangible social returns
- **Enhance accountability** – showing stakeholders how investments lead to real, measurable benefits for communities
- **Support communications** – politicians should be attracted to the idea of social value; showing how it meets their constituents' needs and delivers value for money in difficult economic times.

Integrating social value reporting

To build social value reporting into placeshaping activity:

1. **Identify relevant indicators** – use the HACT Social Value Banks to align metrics with placeshaping work (for example, employment, community engagement and wellbeing improvements)
2. **Collect data** – work with residents and partners to track involvement and outcomes
3. **Calculate social value** – apply the HACT methodology to identify the monetary worth of placeshaping activity
4. **Communicate findings** – include social value results in reports and presentations.

Lessons from practice: Greatwell Homes



Greatwell Homes commissioned HACT to evaluate its placeshaping work and calculate the social value generated.

A lot of the questions we were asking residents to generate social value were similar, but not exactly the same as, the UK Social Value Banks questions. This meant that a large part of the social value in year 1 could only be presented as 'indicative' social value, rather than 'actual' results.

Another key learning point in year one was that not all of our placeshaping activities lent themselves easily to showing a social value return. This led to a lower than anticipated social return on investment.

For following years, we subscribed to the HACT UK Social Value Banks, which enabled us to identify and report a wider variety of social value more accurately. From this, Greatwell Homes has significantly increased its expected social return on investment for future years.

Good examples of where social value was generated from 'business as usual' were satisfaction with the money and benefits advice service (which generated £11,811 per person in indicative social value) and satisfaction with the management of anti-social behaviour (£2,400 social return on investment per person).

"Paul from Greatwell Homes helped me and my wife with an appeal to the Department of Work and Pensions Tribunal to dispute our Personal Independence Payment (PIP). He explained the process to us, submitted information to the Tribunal and attended the hearing in Wellingborough. We were awarded over £9,000 in backdated PIP. This enabled us to clear some debts, buy new clothes, and we may be able to go on a much-needed holiday."

Resident feedback on support from Greatwell Homes' money and advice service.

Examples using outcomes from the HACT Social Value Banks to quantify social value

These examples show how activities and impact can be measured. The figures quoted are per person.



Physical placeshaping

Outcomes could include 'Resolve problems with dwellings' or 'Resolve problems with local streets'. These could result in an adjusted total social value of **approximately £3,900** per person reporting a positive change.



Economic placeshaping

Outcomes for measurement could include 'Training', 'Apprenticeships', 'Employment', 'Work experience' or 'School engagements'. These could demonstrate an adjusted total social value of **approximately £12,300** for someone moving from unemployment into full-time work.



Social placeshaping

Outcomes could be 'Belonging to a neighbourhood', 'Good neighbourhood' or 'Talks to neighbours'. These could show adjusted total social value of **approximately £7,200** for one person feeling a positive sense of belonging to their neighbourhood.



Democratic placeshaping

Outcomes could include 'Member of a social group' or 'Active in tenant group'. These could indicate an adjusted total social value of **approximately £1,550** for one person being part of a social group.

The bigger picture – harnessing the power of data

Using data intelligently allows housing providers to evidence their impact; not just assume that good intentions lead to good results. In challenging financial times, strong data can help organisations to make the right decisions about investment priorities.

Embedding clear measures and metrics into placeshaping work helps to ensure our efforts are:

- **Credible** – backed by tangible proof of real improvements
- **Accountable** – transparent to residents, partners and the Regulator
- **Sustainable** – built around clear targets to guide future investment and innovation
- **Valuable** – demonstrate savings to the public purse alongside more intangible benefits like people's personal wellbeing.



“The sensory garden will serve as a sanctuary for students, fostering both their academic and emotional wellbeing. It provides a calming space for students to immerse themselves in nature, find inspiration and develop essential life skills.

“Our students, especially the young carers, will greatly benefit from this sanctuary and unique environment for learning and personal growth.”

Laura Parker, Principal of Wrenn School in Northamptonshire, talking about a partnership project to provide a sensory garden for young carers.

Step five: reporting outcomes and evidence

The final step is to report on progress and success. Clear, transparent reporting helps with decision-making, builds trust with residents and strengthens organisations' reputations with other stakeholders.

Reporting isn't just about compliance; it's about showcasing the difference we make. Residents want to know how their inputs have shaped decisions and services, while partners want to see a return on their support and investment. And the Regulator needs evidence of compliance with the consumer standards and delivering excellent outcomes for residents.



Key elements of effective reporting

To persuade people about the importance and value of placeshaping:

- 1. Tell a story** – data can be powerful, but combining it with real-life stories can make all the difference. Use case studies and resident testimonials alongside performance metrics to show how placeshaping supports corporate objectives.
- 2. Be transparent** – clearly and honestly show where progress has been made and where challenges remain. Acknowledge setbacks and explain how they're being addressed.
- 3. Use multiple formats** – use a variety of ways to present information. For example, reports, dashboards, videos, displays, newsletters, visits, seminars and meetings.
- 4. Make it accessible** – keep language clear and jargon-free. Ensure reports are easy to understand and available in different formats, including digital and print.
- 5. Close the loop** – show residents how their feedback has influenced things. Reporting should be part of a continuous cycle of engagement, not just one-way broadcast.

Practical steps for reporting

1. **Link to your scorecard** – use a placeshaping scorecard like the one in Appendix 3 (page 30) to show progress against the four placeshaping strands
2. **Share performance data** – include key Tenant Satisfaction Measures that relate to placeshaping activities
3. **Highlight resident involvement** – show how residents' inputs have shaped initiatives and outcomes
4. **Celebrate success** – showcase positive examples of improvement and investment in communities
5. **Address challenges openly** – outline areas needing improvement and how they will be tackled
6. **Engage partners** – build collaboration and support by sharing placeshaping reports with key stakeholders, including the local authority, local MPs and community organisations.

Appendix 3
Placeshaping scorecard

How's our Greatwell Homes measured in placeshaping progress and impact.
TSM – Tenant Satisfaction Measures. SDN – Sustainable Data Network.

Strand	Measure	Score	Target	Notes
Physical	Compliance with the revised Shared Homes Standard	100%	100%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
	Engaging with residents to improve service after	75%	80.2%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
	% of homes rated as 'SFC' and 'C' or above	83.9%	85.1%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
	Actual investment programme delivered to improve energy efficiency of our homes	100%	100%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
	Change ideas and make environmental improvements	15	15	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
	Engaging with residents to improve service after	83.9%	80.2%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
Economic	Engaging with residents to improve service after	83.9%	80.2%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
	Engaging with residents to improve service after	83.9%	80.2%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
	Engaging with residents to improve service after	83.9%	80.2%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25
	Engaging with residents to improve service after	83.9%	80.2%	See 'tenant involvement' page 25



Annual placeshaping reports

If placeshaping really is a priority, it should have a dedicated section in every organisation's annual report. This helps to:

- Show year-on-year progress in a structured and accessible way
- Demonstrate accountability to residents, partners and regulators
- Celebrate successes and identify areas for improvement
- Encourage further investment in placeshaping.

Lessons from practice: Greatwell Homes

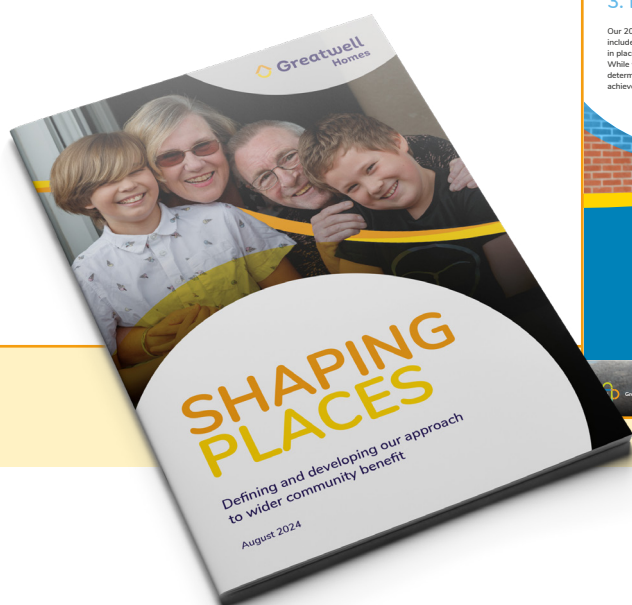


Greatwell Homes publishes an annual Placeshaping report. Our first annual **Placeshaping report** in 2023/24 set out the achievements for the previous year along with opportunities to improve.

We published the report on our website and presented it to the Customer Assembly (a strategic part of the association's involvement structure). We also shared the report with key partners who responded positively to our approach to defining and measuring our role as a placeshaper.

The following year's report showed clear improvements against the year one scores, which in turn supported a significant increase across several Tenant Satisfaction Measures for 2024/25.

Under the physical placeshaping theme, customers were clear that clearing and repurposing unused and neglected garage sites was a priority. We regenerated 15 former garage sites in 2024/25, which contributed towards higher local satisfaction. The score for our approach to handling anti-social behaviour (TP12) increased by 8.8%, and satisfaction that we make a positive contribution to the neighbourhood (TP11) rose by 8%.



“The Neighbourhood Housing Officer was personable, approachable, transparent and straight to the point. She was patient and kind, and helped me to fill in forms because I have dyslexia. I appreciated this so much.”

Greatwell Homes resident commenting on her experience of support with an anti-social behaviour problem.

The bigger picture – how to use placeshaping to evidence compliance with Consumer Standards

Placeshaping can be a compelling way to demonstrate compliance with Tenant Satisfaction Measures and Consumer Standards. The Regulator of Social Housing expects providers to show how they deliver positive outcomes for residents, so placeshaping activities can directly contribute to meeting these expectations.

Embedding placeshaping firmly into reporting enhances resident engagement and provides the Regulator with clear, measurable evidence of compliance with the Consumer Standards.

Aside from the requirements already noted, placeshaping relates to several key standards. For example:

- Registered providers, having taken account of their strategic objectives, the views of tenants and their presence within the areas where they provide social housing, must: identify and communicate to tenants the roles registered providers play in promoting social, environmental and economic wellbeing and how those roles will be delivered (*Neighbourhood and community standard 2.1.1*)
- Registered providers must clearly set out their approach for how they deter and tackle hate incidents in neighbourhoods where they provide social housing (*Neighbourhood and community standard 2.2.2*)
- Registered providers must provide services that support tenants to maintain their tenancy or licence and prevent unnecessary evictions (*Tenancy standard 2.2.1*)
- Registered providers must provide support for accessing mutual exchange services to relevant tenants who might otherwise be unable to use them (*Tenancy standard 2.4.4*)
- Registered providers must ensure that the safety of tenants is considered in the design and delivery of landlord services and take reasonable steps to mitigate any identified risks to tenants. (*Safety and quality standard 2.2.3*).

“Thank you for putting in more car parking around Minerva Way. Parking has always been a problem around here. I’m very supportive and grateful for the work you’re doing guys. What an amazing job.”

Sam, Greatwell Homes resident commenting on the regeneration of unused garage sites



Turning placeshaping into lasting impact

This toolkit's five-step approach shows how to embed placeshaping in a modern housing business, from defining 'place' and engaging with residents to measuring, reporting, and evidencing impact.

By adopting this method, housing providers can:

- **Build stronger, more resilient communities** – by involving residents in shaping their neighbourhoods
- **Improve service delivery** – aligning housing initiatives with local priorities and needs
- **Demonstrate compliance and accountability** – through transparent reporting and measurable outcomes
- **Build and secure lasting partnerships** – to showcase the value and impact of placeshaping activities.

Placeshaping is part of our professional commitment to making sure social housing plays a leading role in creating communities where people are proud to live. In a fast-changing world, residents' priorities will inevitably change over time, so placeshaping plans need to be kept under constant review to make sure they reflect what communities need and want. The steps recommended in this toolkit should be a core part of organisations' business planning cycle to ensure genuine residents influence over both strategy and services.

“We work in partnership with Greatwell Homes on a variety of community and placeshaping projects, which create amazing spaces for people in our communities now and for future generations. What's really important in creating lasting impact is how we work closely and in smart ways together to ensure we develop and deliver the right things for residents.”

Adele Wylie, Chief Executive,
North Northamptonshire Council



CEO Jo Savage and Executive Director Chris Holloway pictured with colleagues at Hemmingwell in Wellingborough, supporting the NHF's Plan For Housing election campaign in 2024.

Appendices

- 1 Placeshaping decision template
- 2 Resident consultation survey
- 3 Placeshaping scorecard

Appendix 1

Placeshaping decision template

'Start by doing what's necessary, then do what's possible and suddenly you are doing the impossible'

Attrib. St. Francis of Assisi

1. Regulatory and statutory requirements

List below the tasks / projects that your organisation **must** deliver over the next 3-4 years and link them to the most appropriate placeshaping theme. These tasks might come from current gaps in consumer standards evidence, or service developments required by forthcoming legislation.

Key:



Physical placeshaping



Social placeshaping



Economic placeshaping



Democratic placeshaping

Task	Which placeshaping theme does this task align to?			
	 Physical	 Economic	 Social	 Democratic

2. Other priorities

These priorities might come from trends in complaints data, tasks or recommendations from customer scrutiny or planned activity in current strategies and corporate plans. Again, list them below and link them to the most appropriate placeshaping theme.

Task	Which placeshaping theme does this task align to?			
	 Physical	 Economic	 Social	 Democratic

3. What you're doing already

It's important to recognise what you already do as a housing provider and how this fits the four key placeshaping themes. For example, repairs, planned improvements and anti-social behaviour services contribute to physical placeshaping, while employment support and money and benefits advice match the economic theme.

Task	Which placeshaping theme does this task align to?			
	 Physical	 Economic	 Social	 Democratic

This 'long list' should then be shared with customers (refer to **Step three** of the toolkit, and the consultation survey at Appendix 2) to ensure you get the maximum spread of customer views.

Once residents have commented on the priorities, a final list should be shared with operational leads to ensure the tasks are both affordable and deliverable. From there, please refer to **Step four: measuring success**.

Appendix 2

Resident consultation survey

Greatwell Homes used a **Microsoft Forms online survey** like the one below to consult with residents about its placeshaping priorities (based on the long list of options created at **Step three**).

Organisations can use the format below as a template to build their own surveys.

Helping us to be more than just a housing provider

Greatwell Homes is proud to be a member of **PlaceShaper** – a national network of community-focused social housing providers.

We want communities to be Happy, Safe and Green places that people are Proud to call home. Placeshaping is about four key things:

- **Physical** – homes, local spaces and the services we provide to keep communities safe, clean and well maintained (for example, planned maintenance, neighbourhood management and caretaking).
- **Economic** – help with jobs, training, employment and money advice.
- **Social** – monitoring our services and playing an active role in neighbourhood life and events.
- **Democratic** – encouraging local decision-making with residents to shape communities.

This survey asks what you think about our placeshaping work and how we can do more. It should take you no longer than ten minutes, and we'll use the results to help us invest in what matters most to you and your community.

1. How important are the four kinds of placeshaping to you?*

(Please put your most important at the top and least important at the bottom)

- Physical
- Economic
- Social
- Democratic

2. How important are these kinds of physical placeshaping to you?*

(Please put your most important at the top and least important at the bottom)

- Your home exceeds the government's **Decent Homes Standard**
- Your home is energy efficient
- We tackle anti-social behaviour effectively
- We manage fly-tipping effectively
- Homes for older people exceed government guidelines

3. How else could we improve the physical condition of your home and local spaces?

(Please write below)

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4. How important are these kinds of economic placeshaping to you?*

(Please put your most important at the top and least important at the bottom)

- Opportunities to employ low-risk prisoners on licence
- Offering apprenticeships for Greatwell Homes residents
- Help with welfare benefits and money advice
- Helping people get back into work or find better jobs
- Helping people to get 'green' jobs that protect the environment

5. How else could we help with training, jobs and money advice?

(Please write below)

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6. How important are these kinds of social placeshaping to you?*

(Please put your most important at the top and least important at the bottom)

- Community initiatives that make you feel proud of your neighbourhood (for example, litter picks or social events)
- Environmental or 'green' projects and opportunities
- Monitoring our services such as communal cleaning, grounds maintenance or caretaking
- Getting involved in activities like mediation between neighbours, mentoring someone in your community or helping someone who is lonely and isolated

7. How else could we support community groups and activities in your area?

(Please write below)

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8. How important are these kinds of democratic placeshaping to you?*

(Please put your most important at the top and least important at the bottom)

- Deciding how we prioritise and spend money on local environmental projects
- Setting up a neighbourhood group to make decisions in your area
- Taking over and running local services through the **Right to Manage**

9. How else might you be interested in volunteering to help with activities in your community?

(Please write below)

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Appendix 3

Placeshaping scorecard

Here's how Greatwell Homes measured its placeshaping progress and impact.

TSM = Tenant Satisfaction Measure SDR = **Statistical Data Return**.

Theme	Measure	Metric	Output (quantitative key performance indicator)	Outcome (qualitative social return on investment)
Physical	Compliance with the revised Decent Homes Standard	100% homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard	100%	See capturing residents' views , page 12
	Embedding refreshed repairs and maintenance service offer	78% of customers satisfied with repairs	96.2% (TSM 83.9%)	See decision template , page 27
		At least 93% of customers satisfied with their last repair	83.9% (TSM)	See measuring success , page 15
	% of homes rated at EPC level 'C' or above	100% of EPC ratings up to date through inspections or modelling existing data	(SDR) 4,898 homes low cost rental, of which 1,191 EPC unknown	See customer feedback , page 10
		Annual investment programmes delivered to improve energy efficiency of our homes	1	See measuring success , page 15
	Garage sites and wider environmental improvements	Number of improvements delivered	15	£111,908 total See page 23
	Managing crime, anti-social behaviour and enviro-crime	Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling of anti-social behaviour	67.5% (TSM)	See lessons from practice , page 17
		80% of fly-tipping reports responded to within target time	98.5%	See safer neighbourhoods , page 2
		Anti-social behaviour cases opened (per 1000 homes)	42.0 (TSM)	See lessons from practice , page 22
		Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods	70.1% (TSM)	See green spaces partnership project , page 13
Economic	Apprenticeship scheme	Evidence of apprentices securing permanent roles at Greatwell Homes and/or achieving recognised qualifications	1	£11,294 per person See page 18
	Employing prisoners on licence (with HMP Five Wells)	Number of vacant roles taken up by prisoners on licence	0	£12,309 per person
	Continued debt and benefit advice	80% satisfaction with support and advice provided	100%	£129,926 total See lessons from practice , page 17
	Providing employment opportunities and work experience opportunities to local people and customers	Employing local people on service contracts as part of our procurement commitment	3	£33,881 total
		Evidence of apprentices securing permanent roles at Greatwell Homes and/or achieving recognised qualifications	1 (included above)	£11,294 per person See page 18

Placeshaping scorecard continued

Theme	Measure	Metric	Output (quantitative key performance indicator)	Outcome (qualitative social return on investment)
Social	Continue to grant fund projects linked to local/ customer priorities	Number of projects funded	7	See bike repair partnership project , page 14
	Estate action days and estate walkabouts	Number of walkabouts completed	31	See local council partnership , page 24
	Work with young people to have an active voice in their neighbourhoods	Number of young people recruited	156	See sensory garden project , page 19
	Build links with partners to deliver community partnerships	Two community initiatives created and supported each year	2	See local partnership projects , page 24
Democratic	Consider participatory budgeting for environmental improvements	Number of improvements delivered	2	See local car parking improvements , page 23
	Explore voluntary and paid opportunities for customers (for example, as mediators)	Evidence of apprentices securing permanent roles at Greatwell Homes and/or achieving recognised qualifications	3 Customers on Customer Assurance Committee	£33,881 total
	Re-accreditation for TPAS standard	Re-accreditation achieved	Yes	See benefits of accreditation , page 10



Contact

To find out more about placeshaping and the approach described in this toolkit, please contact **Chris Holloway, executive director** – Greatwell Homes, and see **Greatwell Homes**.

And for more about measuring impact and social value, see **PlaceShapers** and **HACT**.

