

# FOREWORD

## Lord Taylor of Goss Moor



This report was inspired by the Housing minister Kit Malthouse, who challenged architects to create great homes and communities.

If the great majority of what we build is poor quality 'anywhere estates' designed thoughtlessly (and I believe it is), we simply reinforce opposition to new homes being built at all. Yet every village, town, and city we love, every neighbourhood and community village we aspire to live in, was built by people for people. Why have we lost faith in our ability to do as well? Some of the very loveliest places evolved over time in tiny, hand-crafted evolutions that are hard to replicate today - but many equally successful places were created at scale, streets and terraces and avenues and even whole new communities from the 18th to the 20th century, using pattern books and master designs.

The UK has a great tradition of architects as visionary placemakers not just facade tweakers. To believe we can't deliver great places and wonderful homes is clearly wrong. As this report illustrates, the tradition of 'great homes and great placemaking' has not been lost. The challenge is to rediscover the belief in doing it right more often, and understand the thinking that goes into this - and fire the imagination and will to do more.

If the complaint is often heard that new homes are too often 'bland boxes', I am clear the answers won't come simply by rethinking the box, but also by looking outside the box - and I don't mean metaphorically. For me the most important single message of this report is that people live in communities and neighbourhoods and streets and landscapes, not simply in homes. So, architects and everyone else involved in delivering new homes need to start with the ambition to create great neighbourhoods and communities, full of identity and vibrancy. I hate it when policy makers ask us to deliver more homes - the challenge is delivering great communities, places where you and I can aspire to live.

And if you the reader take issue with something in this report, so much the better. Great placemaking comes not only from seeing how others have done things well, but by being inspired to do them even better. There is no one right answer. I urge you to read and think and debate this report - and then set yourself the challenge to do even better than the best you see here.

*Matthew Taylor*