

# NIMBYism

## Not in my Backyard

**Housing shortage is the main issue government should tackle to cater for growing population. The UK housing market has to be more accessible for first time buyers but also for those at the top of the property ladder who wish to downsize. It is estimated by Federation of Master Builders that approximately 220,000 new homes has to be built every year. Britain housing crisis has to be tackled as soon as possible and for plans to build millions of new homes local residents are not always in favour.**

NIMBY is the acronym of 'Not in my Backyard' used to express by local community the opposition to plans by council or government to locate in their neighbourhood some new development projects. Reasons for nimby are various, amongst others planned project might be in too close proximity to existing properties, often it might be considered to likely decrease values of nearby homes. Plans to build jails, waste points, rehabilitation centres or factories etc. are often not welcomed by local citizens. Other examples of opposed developments include any sort of housing development like skyscrapers, chemical plants, military bases, wind turbines, entertainment clubs, nursing homes, sports stadiums, retail parks, railways etc.


The claimed reasons against some developments include increased traffic, harm to local small businesses, loss of residential property value, en-

vironmental pollution, light and sound pollution, noise pollution, disruption to existing architecture.

Nimbyism occurs also in cases of new houses developments with claims they will have impact on the loss of a community small town character or increase in population which will lead to strain on local public resources and schools. Sometimes there is also fear of increase in the crime or fear of some environmental disaster.

Often local residents want to protect the green spaces on which proposed developments are planned. For instance North Hertfordshire District Council published its local plan proposing to build 14,200 new homes by 2031, many of them on the green space areas. People moved to suburbs





for the peace and quiet countryside feeling and often worry that there is not enough infrastructure to cope with the additional population. However the Chartered Institute of Housing is against Nimbys stating that homeowners are unrealistic by opposing new build developments and in the same depriving their children or grandchildren affordable places to live.

New research published by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) shows that suitable brownfield sites across England can provide at least 1.1 million new homes. CPRE is calling for national policies that ensure brownfield development is prioritised over greenfield development and support the provision of new homes on suitable brownfield sites. These include brownfield registers across the country, and an instruction for councils to refuse permission for greenfield sites where they would compete with the development of nearby brownfield land. Recent CPRE research showed that on average brownfield sites are developed half a year faster than greenfield while previous research demonstrated that brownfield is a renewable resource. Shaun Spiers, chief executive of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), said: "We need to build good,

affordable homes quickly in the right places. No one is suggesting that we will be able to provide all the homes we need without ever building on a greenfield site. But the Government needs to do much more to reconcile its commitment both to build a million homes and to protect the countryside, including the Green Belt it recently described as 'sacrosanct'. "These official figures show that there is plenty of suitable brownfield land available, and that the supply of brownfield land continues to grow. The Government and local authorities must now ensure that developers use it. This will not only save countryside, it will help ensure thriving towns and cities."

Housing costs in the UK are amongst the highest in the world. The UK housing stock is amongst the smallest in the Europe and until more houses are built, prices will continue to increase. Resistance to development must be overcome. So far, for years instead of investing in new builds, in the UK residents have been pumping their money into the old assets. Now problem is not with the demand or money but with the possibility to build. There is not enough of building plots, too many brownfield registered as green belts and too complicated process of obtaining the building permission.