

A CITY FOR ALL LONDONERS

Housing Workshop
21st November 2016, 9.30 – 13.00

Mixed and balanced communities Table 8 Session 1

Facilitator in bold facilitator – comments in bold

Respondents in regular text

These notes are a summary of the conversation

Session 1, Table 8

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Rachel Takens-Mill, Trust for London

Byron Kenizi, volunteer in the Strategic Access Panel

Bob Green, Stonewall Housing

Michael Ball, Waterloo Community Development Group

Alex Csicsek, London Borough of Bexley

Jane Clossick, London Metropolitan University

How can the London plan encourage mixed and balanced communities? At the moment, the London plan has a policy on that, but it says it should be promoted; there is not much more than that in there.

What is d and balanced? Mixed tenure or mixed economy housing?

What we mean at the moment is mixed tenure.

We also need to think about infrastructure, space for incubator businesses.

My organization, in Waterloo, has always prioritised mixed and balanced communities. It's all about employment, retail, and the streets we live in, social infrastructure, schools. I've brought up two kids in Waterloo, and they went to school in Pimlico, which was the nearest mixed and balanced school. A critical element is housing, I've lived in many places. You walk across a Borough line and everything changes. It is critical to London performance, to creating a City for All Londoners. This phrase is a mantra for everything.

What research is out there on mixed and balanced communities, and benefits?

There is a lot of research on mixed tenure, with unclear results.

There is a lot in relation to health.

Maybe mixed and balance communities needs to be a lot wider than housing policy. This is what people need.

Housing is key.

From a Local Authority point of view and when negotiating planning applications, it is a difficult idea that you can build your way out of something. It is key to look at the context and what can sustain a community. Building a 4-bed takes a lot of floor space. In Wandsworth, for example, lots of 4-beds are under-occupied. How do you move people on is a question. One of the very important things we are thinking about is how you use what is already there. Lot of council development we are doing in Wandsworth is about finding neighbourhood solutions. We will develop two beds, so we can effectively offer existing social renters somewhere to downsize to.

It has to be based on research. If you look at previous London Plans, they are not based on true evidence. You have got to find out who are all the Londoners, and the plan should be based on meeting those needs. You need to know who are the communities, and then you can develop the plan. A lot of authorities are not looking at the needs of different communities; they don't know the needs of, for example, gypsy communities, travellers etc. Then you can look at do we need more 4-beds, 2-beds etc.

A lot of the key to solving problems is looking at transport. We are fighting a losing battle at making London dream vision a reality; at some point you are going to run out of space. There are a lot of places outside London where it only takes 20 minutes to get to central London, which is funny compared to how long it takes me to get from one part of London to another. It boils down to are you going to be standing up for a 25-minute journey, what is journey going to be like, is it reliable, if the train breaks down are you absolutely stuck.

The problem is places outside London don't have a need to respond to Londoners. There is no reasonable development plan for the whole of the South East.

We are having conversations with the wider South East, but a lot of the wider South East areas are not meeting their own needs. But where we are having fruitful conversations is about improving transport connections.

Something we find is that when we talk about development in London, we are talking about high density. Wider South East is looking at low density; we need to get them thinking like us. But they are difficult conversations to have; it looks like we are making it their problem.

If you are in an East London Borough, you would look more to an Essex Borough. If Wandsworth people want a house, they are going to go South. I can absolutely understand why London Mayor will look at London. But the reality is that London people don't look at borders of Boroughs, or borders of London. If you do offer London investment to places outside London you need to think about fact that Wandsworth residents would rather live in a house with a garden than one of our estates. There isn't really the space for that. And what you – as the Greater London Authority- want us to do is build densely.

What you are saying is we don't want families in Central London.

No, what I'm saying is, if people have the choice, they will look for a house with garden. In Wandsworth we will develop flats. That is the reality.

The idea of mixed communities presupposes that people have choice about where they want to live. The reality is the choice is not there. We need to think about the cost, we are almost saying we need a new community, in Hatfield, for example.

We are replacing all of the council social rental housing, providing lots of family houses and additional social rent housing. It can be done. The difficulty is that social renters still very often feel excluded from the investment around them.

There was the major estate regeneration in Vauxhall in the 1990s, which started out by saying this is awful, and they got to a deal where people would have been housed in Barnes, it would have resulted in population density. They got to a deal, where the council put in lighting and other amenities, and people decided to stay. You need to work with what's there. That is a problem with opportunity areas, they don't do that. In Vauxhall they turfed everything out. Waterloo is also an opportunity area and we didn't do that, partly because we have strong community. We have the Shell re-Development, but it is an area, so we have massive developments on small sites. The alternative is you that don't have estates. I went to the Northern Line station near Mill Hill, and it was all one and two-story bungalows. I thought this is crazy, why are we doing that. I live in Tulse Hill, on a major development that could be 67 stories; you need to work with the community. Otherwise the community will just be saying no, because they are not being worked with.

That is the difficulty, on one hand working with communities that are still there, but also developing for those that aren't there yet. And encouraging communities to accept what is being developed.

It is about involving them. Set estate regeneration in the terms that you are going to provide a higher quality of accommodation. You also need to be very aware that it is a whole effort. People are going to feel alienated by change if they don't think they are going to benefit.

Schools are a big thing. When people hear development they don't think 'this is going to provide a new school', they think 'it is going to overcrowd my school'. We really need to make that connection between this is going to bring development to my local community. Neighbourhood plans, -we don't have many of them-, but they show that people can work together.

We need to think about retail. The big fight we have had in Waterloo is trying to retain a big shopping centre. The shopping centre is much bigger than the (unclear- 8000?) houses that were going to replace it, thousands of workers come to work there. It is more complicated than just a GP. You can regenerate your town centre and make it an exciting place. It depends what your community wants and needs.

It is important to think about how people's lifestyles are changing. People are working more from home. Mobile phone technology is changing way people socialise. It is good to have vision about where things are going. This is going to increase. If you look at somewhere like Japan, people are becoming more isolated and agoraphobic. I think that is the way we are going. If you look at things like shared working spaces, that is good, people can socialise and be in the community.

It comes back to what has been said at the start. Understanding what we mean by mixed and balanced communities can be quite useful. Also lots of workers need to live nearby, having supportive infrastructure is important. Something broader than housing would be helpful. A lot of people do value local communities and being very localised.

It is almost having a statement of intent. It is all of the things we have said. If you discuss something to do with health, it is hugely difficult; the revenue only pops in after the community is there. It is difficult to discuss 200 m of floor space for health development if you don't have revenue.

Social housing which (unclear- people can invest in?) can be a way round the problem of poverty. When people can afford a little bit it gets banked, it helps them to get out of poverty, and helps London as a whole.

I am sitting here thinking that London is a series of communities, a community in say Waterloo has quite different problems to some areas of Southwark, We need to also recognise different needs and that different approaches work for different areas. In London, apart from our town centre, which we have a master plan for; we need to be clear that London is series of different communities.

We wouldn't want the statement to be specific about what the mix should be...

I think that our health statistics in particular, show that there is a massive division in health. Whether in Sutton or in Waterloo, you should be able to have the same quality of health. There needs to be a level of fairness and quality of life, anybody anywhere would find that difficult to disagree with.

In terms of the London Plan and how we deliver these things, sometimes we are in danger of having statements that no-one would disagree with but the question is how do we have teeth.

It comes back to evidence.

There is the danger of missing certain elements of communities; we need a plan that considers the whole of London. It is difficult when we think of communities that may not have lots of gypsies and travellers, say. You also need to be thinking about future-proofing your plan, the impact of changes to London welfare benefits, what young Londoners are going to be able to afford next year. What does the future of housing look like? It means the London Plan needs to be thinking about, ok we can promise a certain amount of market rentals, but in five years' time, if everyone has bought in developments, where is the mixed tenure there?

The other area is about opportunity areas and housing zones. Them having some teeth in themselves would be quite useful. Sutton has a housing zone – a bit like an opportunity area – the issue has been that benefits haven't really flown to councils. For example, if a Housing Association is going to be developing in an area, you need certainty in rental income. If you haven't got a rental policy that is difficult. Rent is going down by 1% per annum. If you haven't got certainty rental income, you are going to be less likely to invest in development. I take your point about communal business space, where you can rent a desk, those are other elements that could be interesting and should be promoted.

A key issue for delivery is working with what is there, working with communities, rather than razing everything, and creating a huge speculative fund feast. That makes things incredibly

complicated and difficult and slow. For example Wandsworth, for 10 years as opportunity area did nothing, and only now we are seeing results.

-I don't agree-

I am talking about the Lambeth bit, the bit around the cluster, as an extreme example. Key to that is that there is more certainty if you work with what is there, rather than having a speculative fund feast, and bringing up tall buildings.

Good point about tall buildings. We want to have mixed and balance communities and are going to have to make most of all land with have, having higher density. How do we do both?

One of Lambeth's tactics has been to take things off-site. If you have 20 units that are affordable, it is not going to help that many people. If you take the value of that and invest it in the surrounding area, that is going to help more. One of Lambeth's tactics has been to invest in local regeneration.

It comes to the heart of this table. The Blackfriars development is coming up. If it is going to be (Unclear -99%?) social housing, and you are putting 25 million in, you are going to create more social housing if you use that elsewhere.

What is the more important aim? More housing, or mixed and balanced?

In terms of practicalities, I have lived on a not very nice estate, and you have got to look at why people live in certain tower blocks. One of the reasons for violence is to do with noise in tower blocks; you are not going to tell your neighbour to be quiet. If you have a Mum with kids in flat below, she knows by living there that her neighbour is a drug dealer. You have got to look at what comes with tower blocks; you have close proximity, a Mum who walks by drug dealers every day.

I guess that is another issue about the mix. Thinking about lots of young families, younger people and older people, and how they live alongside each other.

It raises issues of design, and designing for different needs.

And certain standards, like light. All the time in central London, you are told you that if you live in central London, you can't expect to have much light. No one is going to benefit. Developing with those standards is really important. The problem is precisely that a developer comes along and wants to design something big, and therefore we are going to trash the standards of those around us. We have got to work with what's there.

The Mayor is looking at setting up a new viability team. He is also looking at 50% affordable housing. Is there a way we can feed in in terms of mixed and balance communities, looking at how viabilities can incentive developers to value more non-financial elements of developments? At least we can put something in there. That maybe there is another way of looking at this. Looking at viability of schemes and developers, is there a different way of pushing developers in a different direction?

The Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) coming out this week will hopefully go some way to encourage developers to do that.

It needs more than encouraging.

Just to be clear, are you going to encourage by – if you build over 30% affordable- you don't need to do a viability assessment?

Yes. The idea is the developer can have a choice, and go for the easier route.

Developers have always been one step ahead in trying to get around things.

Going back to community fund, and rather than delivering on site, delivering somewhere else. Where are we saying that should happen, within the Borough?

Mixed and balanced within the Borough.

It seems to me like, talking about having mix across the Borough, that isn't mixed. We all know what it is like to walk through areas of poverty and violence. An enormous amount of our behaviour comes about through opportunities. There are design solutions: things like, where you put your entrance, is it publicly accessible, can other people see it, how easy is it to form bonds with your neighbours.

Certain people that will find a way around whatever you are putting in. The only way to stop that is to police it.

My point is that people are quite good at policing one another. Like Jane Jacobs eyes on the street. If you throw something off a balcony, no one knows who it was.

There is a lot to say about good communities that can be nurtured through good design policies. Is there anything in the plan that deals with management over the longer-term? You can see design plans, a lot of which have varying degrees of quality, depending on the spectrum. A larger part of estate regeneration should not be needed if they were managed correctly. A lot of investment is entrenched for many years. Within that, it should be managed.

We don't have very good understanding of management either in the plan or planning guidance. It will become more important.

Thinking about private rental sector, there is a lot more thinking of how the plan should be managed, just because of residential load. It is more comprehensively thought through. It requires other functions, like a concierge, and other practical things, like thinking about suitable amounts of surveillance. If someone else doesn't care about the environment why should they?

Good point about management. There are investment management organisations that are community- led. Resident management committees cover small areas and provide a very local management service. They are well regarded by local organisations. There is an issue in terms of sustainability; they need a few very committed individuals. Nonetheless it is a very good model. If you are talking about mixed and balanced communities, how you manage them is very important, and how you involve the community. But you have to be realistic about how you sustain them over longer term.

Have you had a discussion about the right to buy? It seems to be linked to that in terms of the choice factor. If it is managed and you don't have right to buy.

Another element is if local residents own the accommodation and the estate they are on, it is a much greater incentive.

Is there any precedent for that?

Coin Street on the South Bank is a good example. Not quite that kind of ownership but...

You do get council residents buying leasehold and freehold. You have got estates no longer owned by the council.

I am working on development where a long-term owner is involved. I am quite impressed by the long-term owner having invested opportunity to shape development. The long-term owner is very involved in influencing design, up to the point of conception and development. The institutional end purchaser is very much part of the process. If you think about market developments, it is about the developer and contractor. To have one client has been very enlightening. I don't know if there is anything you can do with groups like that.

Thinking about the poverty situation. There is now a Starbucks on every street corner. There needs to be more regulation. It costs £5 to buy a sandwich in Starbucks. There needs to be more pressure for social responsibility.

If you have limited accommodation for those kinds of enterprises, it goes to the highest bidder. If you have more space, you might have community café and Starbucks.

Would you though? Or would you have someone saying I am renting this space next to a Starbucks, I can charge the same prices?

You can require that units be rented at subsidised rents.

In Lower Marsh development, that hasn't happened. The priority was getting mixed and balanced communities. We didn't mind a Pret, but we want other things. The key thing we are saying is about working with communities.

Communities, both residential and business.

Yes.

That brings together two other points, that level and then taking the money and putting somewhere else. If you look at somewhere like Islington, if you look at people living in estates, they still feel very isolated because the area around them is so gentrified. If you look at mixed and balanced, and you want to include lowest 10% and the highest 10%, it is a challenge.

So our three key points are:

-We are not just taking about housing, but all land uses, for employment, economy and housing,

And civic

- The mix needs to be at small spacial level, for it to work

- It needs to be developed in a way that the community, both the residential and business community, are involved in delivering and benefiting from developments.

Did we miss something that could be squeezed in about tenure?

And incentivising, from developer's point of view.

Mixed and balanced communities

Table 8 Session 2

Facilitator in bold facilitator – comments in bold
Respondents in regular text

Session 2, Table 8

Facilitator, Jennifer Peters, Greater London Authority

Marcus Trower, National Bargee Travellers Association

Claudia Firth, Coops for London (and Radical Housing Network)

Steve Butters (Trustee of Campaign to protect rural England. Capacities Ltd)

Michael Bach (London Forum of Amenity & Civic Societies)

Rebecca Young (National Union of Students)

Robin Brown (Hayes Community Forum/Just Space)

Andrew Jones, AECOM

Just a quick background. There is a policy that sits within the London chapter, but it is mainly focussed on housing tenures. I am interested to see what people think should be in the new plan on mixed and balanced communities, should it just be housing or go beyond that?

Taking into account the focus on onsite housing rather than offsite. ‘Mixed and balanced’ is one of the statements that gets said a lot, but what does that mean? How can our policy put that into practice, be something that bites?

Can I take issue with your characterisation of that policy? From a Just Space perspective, we see it as only being applied to mono-tenure estates, traditionally the bastion of socially rented accommodation, that they should become more mixed, whereas the same policy is not applied to owner-occupied tenancy. That is my big challenge to you; it is the way it’s applied. But as you said, you are going to explore different approaches and different meanings.

I wanted to bring a concern from the last discussion. How social housing is being defined seems to be a very narrow definition. Only something for the poorest and for people on benefits. I am a bit concerned about what that definition does in terms of creating (unclear – sink?) housing, when the problem is broader.

We should be thinking about what is the end we want to work towards. Is it mixed and balanced communities, what that means, or is it the experience of being in that community, what it means for the people? You can have a community that looks mixed on paper but the reality is different.

What you do on land is your business, but we would like to be able to live in different places and not be kicked out. In London, the Canal River Trust concretes up banks. In the Thames area, we can’t stay more than 24 hours in some areas. In different areas we are being kicked out. It is not that most of us want to be mixed in itself; we want to be able to live where we live, our community’s hundreds of years old. We would like to be included in that (the mix).

We are not for permanent mooring; we want to be able to travel. We are the least thought about, after gypsies and travellers. Only recently recognised in the Planning and Housing Act, as an assessment of our needs. Before that, there is absolutely nothing in terms of provisions for us.

I have a question about how effective the policy is? Does it bite, or are there more things that we could see in communities in terms of their strength? Or their minimum entitlements? Is it more than tenure? Mixed and balanced is good, but what more are you offering? What should you be doing about neighbourhoods?

Talking about neighbourhoods, what scale, what needs do they have. At the moment we are talking about tenure, but we want to know what more we need to look at, what do we think is important?

I want to highlight one part of the London Plan that is important. The heading promoting 'lifetime neighbourhoods', that Just Space basically wrote. The concept of lifetime homes is well established. Wider doorways for people with wheelchairs. Adjusted staircases. 'Lifetime neighbourhoods' is different; it is about taking account of different needs of members, including the elderly, to be able to move between different parts of the neighbourhood. People interested in whole neighbourhood planning could develop this concept.

One of the key interests of Boris Johnson was developing neighbourhoods with many aspects. For example: resilient, safe. 'Lifetime neighbourhoods' is quite narrow.

Yes, we need to develop it.

We need to think about disability issues. I know people with disabilities that would be seen as being independent, they not living with their families. But they face things like the pavement being too narrow, they are too far from amenities they need, or nowhere near where jobs are. The units they are living in are very singular, no communal element. I guess this links in with the point on connected neighbourhoods.

If you think about the bedroom tax. If you have a carer, your house is not built for having a carer. My mate's mum is paralysed from the neck down. Then the bedroom tax came in. There is a bedroom in her house for her daughter and carer but she can't afford it.

Also the issue of the rents of these properties being so high. If someone wants to move off benefits it is harder to do that because rent is so expensive. We need to think about these properties that are preventing full participation, so that people are integrated in their communities.

With London Plan, there are things the Mayor cannot do that much about.

What about taking money off developers.

There are limits in being able to take money off developers. We need to be thinking about the powers the Mayor has to be able to do something about it.

Was the concept of mixed and balanced communities identified as a gap in the existing plan?

Not necessarily. We have a lifetime neighbourhoods policy and the mixed and balanced communities policy, and would like to see how they can work together. And think about inclusion, picking up on the Mayor's manifesto.

There are areas of high levels of change; areas adjacent to community areas. Or where Mayor is focussing on TFL land. Not always a community area, but mile around it that is under particular stress. Community could take in impact, it is building housing for London, but it could be impacting negatively on surrounding areas, and isolating them further. If we are looking at mixed and balanced, and the strategic plan, are there choices where the major should say, we should focus on these parts? I.e. there may be one part, around a station or an opportunity area, and the Mayor might decide to focus on the area around that. He can't do everything, so what are the areas that he thinks are particularly important? It could be the areas around certain centres, probably where change is going to happen most intensively, and how to support communities near that.

I think the Mayor might be able to do something in opportunity areas, look at what have they achieved. It seems to be an area where the Mayor has most control and faces more pressure in terms of mixed and balanced communities. It could be White City and Earls Court. These are places where change could actually happen, but it is being left largely to market, and not likely to create mixed and balanced communities. If some guidance could be produced it would help.

We should remember that wherever we have opportunity areas now, it was down to the last Mayor.

There needs to be a strong steer from the London Plan, to make the most influence.

In opportunity areas, things like the cost of infrastructure in that area needs to be taken into account.

Local partners are not necessarily buying into mixed and balanced communities.

We need to remember that implementation takes place at very fine-tuned level. East Village for example, has some 4-bed townhouses. I have interviewed people there. You have four professionals sharing houses destined for families. The Mayor has limited control over how they are using the space.

I take your point, can the Mayor intervene more? It is not him who decides.

These are market renters; the Mayor has limited influence over that policy.

It is only recently that Mayor has looked at housing for elderly or students. Fact that often higher density development has to be planned for because the alternative is far worse.

Is there something that could be done in terms of looking at type of student housing, in order to help it to integrate a little more into communities? Students have a bad reputation in lots of communities. But lots of students want to be part of the community. It is part of learning experience, meeting different people. Lots want to volunteer and contribute in that way. It needs to be recognised, there are huge student developments, and it can be quite off-putting.

So you are advocating a dispersal, rather than concentration in clusters?

As the National Union of Students we don't necessarily have a position on that, but one of the things could be considered is consulting on it.

It goes for all types of housing that might be seen as more temporary. For example some ideas of social housing -I don't subscribe to this view necessarily-, some people might need it more short-term and then move on. But there is something about integrating and mixing people that might be temporarily in a place. It is not just about housing, it might be about other things.

Journeying is an aspect of people's lives now.

It is also related to the rental sector, people whose rents are being doubled and need to move.

Is stability a key component of mixed and balanced communities?

No way. If you say it's a key component, you are saying we can't be mixed and balanced without it. Granted it easier to mix if you are in a stable place, but I wouldn't say it's key.

It's about being able to plan.

A power that is increasingly being used is the Article 4 direction, to stop building to rent. I don't know what Mayor's line is on that.

Converting housing if it is done in the right way can be useful. I wouldn't say we have a particular line on it at moment.

There was campaign that wanted to stop student sharing. Few groups in London were involved, they were mainly from smaller places. Issue. On other hand you do need HMOs, they are an essential part of the housing mix. It is something that needs to be kept. Once you start improving, you reduce the space you have.

Often it is young single people that are affected.

Another point in relation to new housing is that workshop facilities, industrial areas, or artist's studios are also in danger because of the likelihood of being converted, but in themselves they help to create mixed neighbourhoods.

Also, if you are traveller or gypsy, you are 80% likely to be turned down for planning permission. There needs to be more encouragement or more allowing of people to live in caravans, bungalows or whatever. There is a problem with the Planning and Housing Act in terms of defining what a gypsy is, it only talks about caravans.

We need to widen 'other use' developments. Both pure market forces but also the government has made it easier to turn anything into housing. They are wiping out 'other use' developments that are making areas more diverse and interesting, and also wiping out employment opportunities.

Those 'other uses', when they are being changed, are they functioning and live?

Yes x 3

That is the unintended outcome. I think the intention was to convert unused places.

When it's gone it's gone.

Has there been any change to live-work units?

Not really, they have been changed into not very good quality studios.

The only thing that might survive is the High Street.

Not necessarily, that is another debate.

There are countervailing trends, and it is about whether the Mayor's plan can nurture them. For example, in Forest Hill, a sculptor turned an area on the High Street into a live-work area. He ended up buying up almost the whole street, turning almost the whole street into a live-work area. That was not done through planning, but through enterprise.

The problem with buying things with workspace function, is keeping it as workspace. You get a lot of small and medium enterprises where the principal owner decides to sell up and it goes to housing.

After the Second World War, there was massive squatting movement that took over a lot of land that would normally belong to richer people, and it was turned into council housing. Now it is a lot harder to squat. There is a plan to take over disused housing for the council. That should be what happens. Rents could be to cover maintenance, rents could be kept lower. Overall you need a social movement. Do what Jeremy Corbyn is doing, encouraging people at grassroots to be fighting for this stuff.

The new London Plan, what does it mean for people in communities who are trying to effect change in their own communities?

It is about what you talked about previously, if people don't like being change being done to them, they need a stake in what's happening.

What is the deal with the London Plan and mixed and balanced communities? What it means hasn't been articulated. What does it look like in terms of encouraging how do we do it? Is there a picture of what this could be?

The Mayor talks about inclusive communities rather than mixed and balanced neighbourhoods.

We could argue that everyone is entitled to the same level of service, the ability to get to same things. What does it look like in 10 years' time?

We should be looking at that level, instead of urban developments, looking at the kind of infrastructure that could support those kinds of communities. My point was to focus on where is the Mayor intervening most.

In terms of facilities, there is conflict between say, NHS planning and town planning. What does the Mayor do in that case?

We need devolution.

The solution does not just reside within the London Plan.

The London Plan does talk about working with other partners.

What we could get out of this is how to shape change in terms of getting better service for Londoners. What are they lacking, how do you fill those gaps? Could be anything from crèche services to GPs. He hasn't got control over all these things but how do you make them come about.

There is a legal practical problem. Planning is under the control of the local Boroughs. The Mayor can overrule but then he can be overruled by central government.

What we are trying to do is get the right ingredients. The Mayor can provide a framework for action.

When talking about lifetime homes, the basis is broader when we have a more transient London. Rentals are short-term. It should work to get more flexibility for those who want it, and stability for those that don't. It creates more pressure on social care, families are already fragmented and might have a grandmother in one part and daughter in another, and it takes an hour to get from one part to the other. Are there mechanisms to provide support to make that it more feasible for them to be closer?

Enabling them to live near each other when they choose.

Yeah a lot of time people are in family homes because it's their home but also their inheritance, there is a whole range of issues. If there was greater choice for people to move into homes nearer to family members, it might free up some homes. It is not about families replacing government, but it is about people being together as family units. And coalescing that around areas of new growth and development. That issue is going to rise and rise.

It is a huge national issue, the temptation is to say this is bigger than London. But we've got to use what we've got.

Don't rely on the government, they are even worse in terms of segmenting house needs. We need a better mix at local level in order to get people to stay and to move.

You've got to look at why people aren't moving to areas where families are. Quite often costs too much. It is about social housing.

And jobs.

Yeah, I was going to say that. I don't think we should just let the national government do what it wants. But you can actually change the national. One example is when the Tories wanted to privatise forests, and there was a big thing against that, and it was stopped. It is not just thinking about this plan and that plan; it is about saying look, housing needs are big problem. If you can't get service workers into areas where they are needed, you have to pay them more, then that affects the industry overall.

There is a huge crisis in social care, especially since most of them come from outside the UK, and with Brexit...

Most of them come from outside Europe. It is nothing to do with Brexit,

It is important for them to be able to live where they need, particularly in social care where you need to provide a couple of hours of care here and there.

The point about this being too big for London, a Mayor with a constituency of 8.5 million people, he can affect change.

Also in terms of devolution, this is an opportunity to set an example, how local government can work with communities to bring about what they want.

How do you project Mayor's values that come across quite strongly here? Unlike the previous plan, this is very much a values plan, it is quite clear about the kind of London he wants to see, how do you translate that into policies and direction of travel that people can buy into. A lot of it is here, it is about articulating that into a picture. Not just a development management document. How do we translate this into vision?

I haven't read this (A City for All Londoners) but I know that the Just Space one is a very good integrated document. It comes at the issue from all different angles.

To answer the question about making specific values real, some of them can come about because the Mayor has power to carry them out, for others there has to be serious lobbying.

It is not just a world city or a global city that is in this London Plan, the Mayor is talking about an inclusive city and lifetime neighbourhoods.

Yes, it's about how to turn this into a planning document, the previous one talked about a world class city and all that, but...

The Just Space document talks about community engagement. Across the whole of London there is only one community council, in Westminster, where there are elected representatives who deal with the issues of amenity and design to the degree of development control and planning. Others tend to be fragmented and small. If we haven't cracked community and citizen participation issue...

It has got to be about building it up with the local community.

What are our three key points?

- 1. It is not just about mixed tenure housing range of services and infrastructure. We could learn a lot from coops. We are talking about the neighbourhood level.**
- 2. We need to think about people that are there already. Provide for flexibility and stability. Having a range of homes and amenities allowing people to stay there.**
- 3. Need to be clear about the principles of mixed and balanced, they need to be articulated. Every place will not necessarily have the same mix.**

It is important to say that if the Mayor is calling for mixed income or mixed tenure neighbourhoods, we want him to carry on.

Yes he should be using these opportunities.

Turning them into practical examples.

Whatever it's called – lifetime neighbourhoods etc – it's about putting those values into practice.

How do you decide who you want to include and who not in terms of mixing? Mainly what I hear is that it is about people who live in housing one way or another. I don't know how we get to that point, why do you always cut us out? You talk about transitional people, renters, how come you don't treat them the same as the travelling communities.

The local authorities and Mayor have to look at what the needs are; they have to take into account gypsies and travellers.

It is quite recent that people renting have become a transient population.

Actually home ownership is relatively new. In some areas there is a high degree of renting and it is not new. It is how it's always been. Apart from in the 1970s where landlords decided to sell off on long leases, there are still areas with high proportions of renters. There is nothing wrong with that: it's about choice.

I do think the general point of thinking about stability and flexibility is important.

Has anyone else got any ideas on how you decide who to include and who not in the mixed communities?

It is driven by research. Institutions like the Joseph Rowntree foundation carry our research. The short answer is that it's income based.

It is driven by needs, not about wanting this group or that group in the mix.

Coops are a really good example of mixed communities. I live in Coin Street area on the Southbank, in a mixed-use building with shops etc. It is contentious...but it is very lively. There are a mix of teachers, shop assistants, and university lecturers. A whole range of people. They play a big part in the local community, are very active.

We could say that we could learn a lot of coops

Yes, definitely.

And Ken Livingstone giving the site for nothing. That helped.

So is the whole intention about getting mix of rich and poor people to live in same area? I don't want that. I don't think there should be luxury developments near me.