

Case Studies

Greenwich Millennium Village, London

The first Millennium Village is an exemplar scheme in the creation of sustainable new communities. The Village, which is located on the eastern side of Greenwich Peninsula, is being developed by Greenwich Millennium Village Limited, a consortium comprising Countryside Properties PLC and Taylor Wimpey Developments Limited working closely with the Homes & Communities Agency and Moat Housing Group.

The mixed-tenure community includes a proposed 2,700 new homes, some 4,500 sq m of commercial space, together with social and community facilities, including a school and health centre, restaurants, workshops, and a new eco park, as well as other open spaces.

Built using best practice and some of the most advanced technology this development seeks to establish new sustainable methods of construction for the future. The Village will be a beacon for 21st century living, with new technologies in the home and environmentally friendly modes of transport.



Background to the Greenwich Millennium Village Scheme

The Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott launched the Millennium Village competition on the 10 July 1997. Its aim was to find a developer to create a community which is built to the highest quality of architectural design, embraces a mixed use approach and addresses environmental and energy conservation issues. The Countryside Properties/Taylor Woodrow consortium, now formally constituted as Greenwich Millennium Village Limited, won the competition in February 1998.

The Masterplan

The Masterplan was created by Ralph Erskine, an internationally recognised architect with a deep understanding of the relationship between communities and the built environment, having previously worked on housing extensively in Europe, as well as in the UK.

Erskine's vision for the Village is to create a vibrant new community that works for people and where the pedestrian has priority over the car. In urban design terms, the Village reintroduces the London square to create streets and public spaces that are human, lively, intimate and secure. The Village itself is built around and overlooks an Ecology Park, created by English Partnerships, now the Homes & Communities Agency.

A New and Sustainable Approach to Construction

Greenwich Millennium Village is being built using advanced technology and adhering to current best practice in the construction industry.

Long-term partnering arrangements are being developed with suppliers so that they too can be encouraged to invest in research and innovation.

The buildings are being made from materials that are environmentally sustainable. Recycled and locally produced materials are being used whenever possible. By maximising off-site prefabrication and by segregating and recycling materials significant reductions in construction waste are being made.

The BREEAM Rating scheme has been adopted at Greenwich Millennium Village. This assessment method aims to show how improved environmental performance can be achieved through good design, rather than high capital cost solutions. Environmental performance is expressed on a scale of Pass to Excellent, and Greenwich Millennium Village has received the mark of Excellent on every phase to date - the first substantial private development in the UK to do so.



Sustainable Living

All homes are being equipped with water and energy efficient domestic appliances. The overall site planning and the orientation of the buildings have been specifically designed to maximise the benefits of solar gain.



Sustainable Transport

The Village is promoting sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling and is well connected to London's newest and best public transport facilities. It will be virtually car free and traffic will be carefully managed to reduce pollution.

Public transport links have been vastly improved in this part of London. Bus services link the Village to the new underground station at North Greenwich. From there, it is a short journey on the Jubilee Line into Central London and just one stop to Canary Wharf.

The Village has been principally designed for the pedestrian. A comprehensive network of pedestrian and cycle routes have been specifically planned to provide interesting, attractive, safe and direct routes within the Village and beyond. Safe and secure cycle stores are being provided throughout the Village, including at public transport interchanges. CCTV enhances safety through monitoring public transport, cycle routes and pedestrian areas.

Environment

New green open space for informal use by adults and children and an Ecology Park that has considerable ecological importance have been established, covering 50 acres. Tens of thousands of trees and shrubs, together with new meadow grass, have been planted and nature trails opened.

The lake is linked to ponds, reed beds and islets to attract birds. This has been highly successful and an abundance of birds and wildlife can be seen from reed-warblers, swifts and house martins to skylarks, herons and foxes.

In addition, £11m has been invested by the Homes & Communities Agency to enhance the Thames foreshore with an innovative river terracing scheme.

Greenwich Yacht Club has been re-housed in new buildings adjoining the Ecology Park.

Greenwich Millennium Village has a unique and natural environment and has won a sustainability award at the RIBA Housing Design Awards and a Civic Trust Award. Indeed, a survey has shown that 80% of home buyers were influenced in their decision to purchase by the environmental agenda for the Village.

Sustainability Targets

Greenwich Millennium Village is setting new standards for environmentally sustainable development. Over the lifetime of the project, the aim is to achieve:

- 80% reduction in primary energy consumption
- 50% reduction in embodied energy
- 50% reduction in construction waste
- 30% reduction in water use
- 30% reduction in construction costs
- 25% reduction in project duration (construction time)

Greenwich Millennium Village encompasses:

- An innovative approach to Masterplanning that uses landscaping, architecture and orientation to create a sheltered and tempered microclimate and transform a virtually uninhabited windswept brownfield site into a place where people want to live and work.
- Technology and innovation that is at the heart of this new urban Village and is evident in the use of sustainable construction techniques.
- Multi-functional urban development which creates a balance through careful design between private and public spaces and involves the successful integration of public transport and pedestrian movement systems.
- The re-use of previously developed land in order to promote regeneration and minimise the amount of new land being taken for development.
- A truly mixed-use development that incorporates flexible mixed-tenure homes, fully integrated leisure, community and employment uses in a bio-diverse habitat.
- Environmentally sustainable development that achieves drastic reductions in construction costs, energy/water consumption and waste.

Community Development

An active Residents Association has been formed which is taking a keen interest in local management issues.

Greenwich Millennium Village Management Limited was set up to be responsible for the long-term management of the Village. This Company will ultimately be owned by the residents/ owners and thus will determine the standards they require.

Recognition

Amongst the widespread recognition that the development has received, Maurer Court at Greenwich Millennium Village has been awarded a CABE Building for Life Gold Standard. Other notable awards include a Civic Trust Award and in WWF's & HBF's Sustainable New Homes Awards, Greenwich Millennium Village was joint overall winner in 2004.

"Greenwich Millennium Village shows what can be achieved with effort and imagination - shaping a new community where people will enjoy living, working or visiting. This community combines excellent urban design with sustainable construction techniques. Lessons learnt here will point the way forward for building other new urban communities around the country."

John Prescott MP, Former Deputy Prime Minister