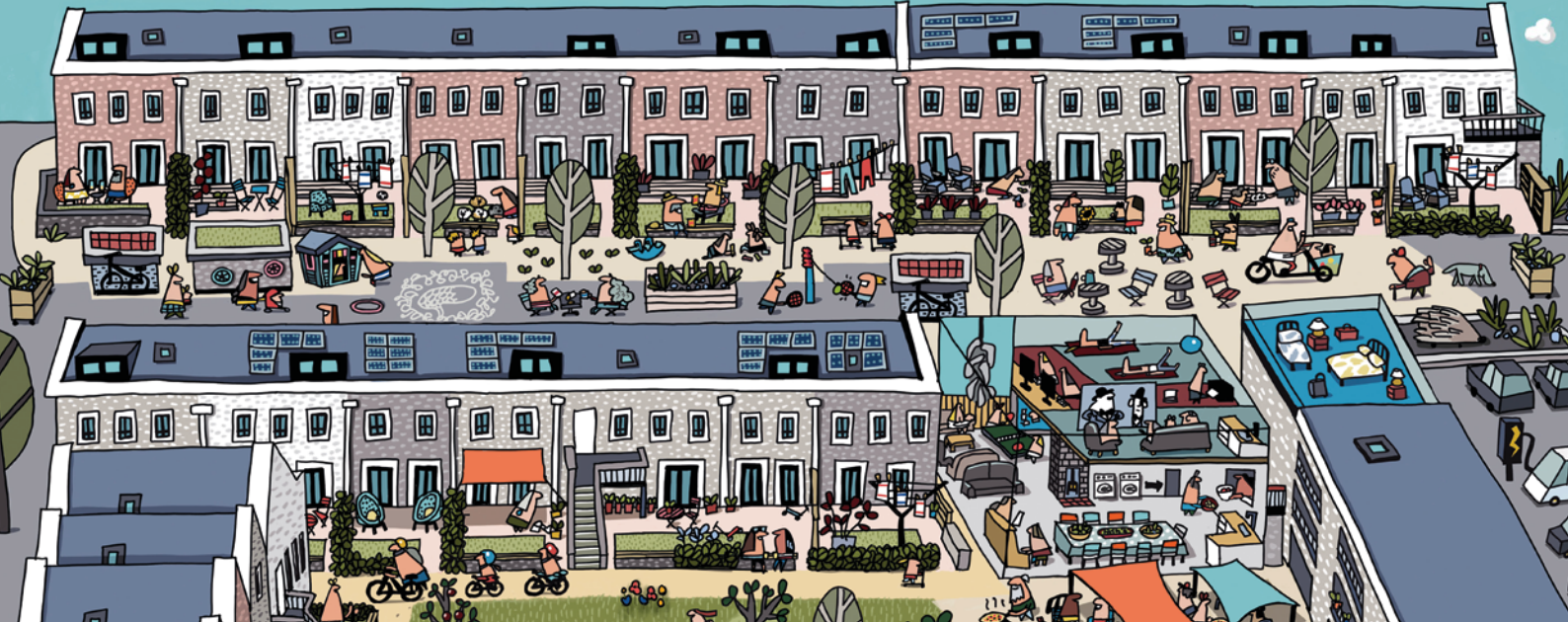


INSIGHTS FROM MARMALADE LANE

TOWN.



FOREWORD

"KIND, LOVING NEIGHBOURS WHO REALLY WANT TO CONNECT WITH AND SUPPORT EACH OTHER ARE THE HEART OF COHOUSING. THE CHILDREN ARE OUT PLAYING AND PEOPLE ARE CHATTING IN BACKYARDS, AND IT FEELS LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE"

Resident of
Marmalade Lane



Described by the Guardian as "the quietly radical result" of Cambridge's first foray into cohousing, Marmalade Lane has become a widely known and lauded example of community-centred housing. Home to around 100 adults and children, today it has a waiting list of over 400 households - enough to fill the development another nine times over.

Marmalade Lane was the product of an innovative partnership between landowner Cambridge City Council, developers TOWN and Trivselhus, and Cambridge Cohousing, whose members would become the development's future residents. TOWN and its design team, headed by Mole Architects, worked closely with future residents to codesign their homes and community spaces.

Combining the familiar form of Cambridge terraced housing with off-site manufactured timber construction, mechanical ventilation, heat pumps and a car-free landscape, the development's 42 homes are complemented by a shared garden, a common house, play street and other shared spaces and facilities that support community life.

Five years after its completion, TOWN, with support from experts at Greengage, decided to take an in-depth look at the impact the development has had on its residents' lives and the social value it continues to generate for them and the wider community. This booklet is a summary of the resulting detailed report.



WAITING LIST FOR HOMES

At the time of writing, Marmalade Lane has a waiting list for a home within the community of over 400 households, two-thirds of whom wish to buy and a third of whom would like to rent – enough to fill the development another nine times over.



WHAT IS COHOUSING?



Marmalade Lane is one of a number of cohousing communities in the UK. Cohousing is a mutually supportive form of living in which people occupy individual homes with additional shared spaces and facilities which they jointly manage and make use of with their neighbours.

Cohousing offers a model for a mixed and active community, with the potential to reduce living costs, consume less and minimise planetary impact.



TOWN.

TOWN is the leading developer of cohousing in the UK, with six new communities currently under development. If you would like to find out more please visit www.waaretown.co.uk

THEMES

In assessing the impact of Marmalade Lane, the report considers nine social, economic and environmental themes. Overleaf, on the main fold out page, the conclusions for each of these themes are summarised along with descriptions of different areas of the community. These themes are:



NEIGHBOURLINESS AND BELONGING

social interaction, engagement with neighbours, a sense of community and reduced isolation.



CONVENIENCE

more efficient daily routines and the associated positive impacts on quality of life.



CARBON, ENERGY AND RESOURCES

the reduction of climate-changing carbon emissions in construction or operation, and ways of living that reduce environmental impacts.



LEARNING

opportunities for education and skills development, to acquire new knowledge, learn from others in the community and hone skills.



CHILDHOOD

opportunities for play, learning and a greater sense of independence in childhood.



CONNECTION TO NATURE

improvements to wellbeing associated with improved sense of and connection to the natural environment, and initiatives that improve biodiversity.



WIDER COMMUNITY BENEFIT

connection with the wider neighbourhood: positive impact of the community beyond the immediate residents.



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

improved physical and mental health, opportunities for exercise and a healthier diet.



COST OF LIVING

reduced costs overall and for individual residents.



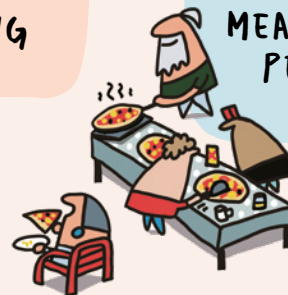
£665,000

SOCIAL VALUE GENERATED BY PEOPLE KNOWING AND TRUSTING THEIR NEIGHBOURS*



£600

TYPICAL ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD ENERGY SAVING



100

COMMUNITY MEALS SERVED PER MONTH

336

GUEST BEDROOM OVERNIGHT STAYS PER YEAR

OVER £1M IN SOCIAL VALUE

THE ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF MARMALADE LANE ARE SUBSTANTIAL, THE CUMULATIVE SOCIAL VALUE FIGURE TOTALS TO £1,054,103*

7 OUT OF 10

HOUSEHOLDS MAKE USE OF THE COMMUNITY SHOP

8 IN 10

RESIDENTS EXERCISE AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK

62 LITRES

PER PERSON PER DAY WATER USE - HALF THE UK AVERAGE

£2,600

TYPICAL ANNUAL SAVING BY USERS OF THE SHARED CAR CLUB



26 =

USES OF THE SHARED CARGO BIKE PER MONTH



96%

OF RESIDENTS FEEL THEY COULD GO TO A NEIGHBOUR IF THEY NEED ADVICE



£45,000

SOCIAL VALUE GENERATED BY COMMUNITY GARDENING*



* The social value figures have been calculated using two recognised methodologies, the HACT Social Value Bank and the National TOMs

EXPLORE MARMALADE LANE

1 PLAY STREET



A car-free street provides space for residents to socialise, for plants and trees, and a safe environment for children's play.

2 GUEST BEDROOMS




Three guest bedrooms are available for residents to book for visiting friends and family, providing a convenient and cost-effective alternative to having a spare room.

3 CAR CLUB



A community-run car club provides a cheaper, more sustainable alternative to private car ownership, with nearly one third of residents not owning their own car.

4 THE COMMON HOUSE

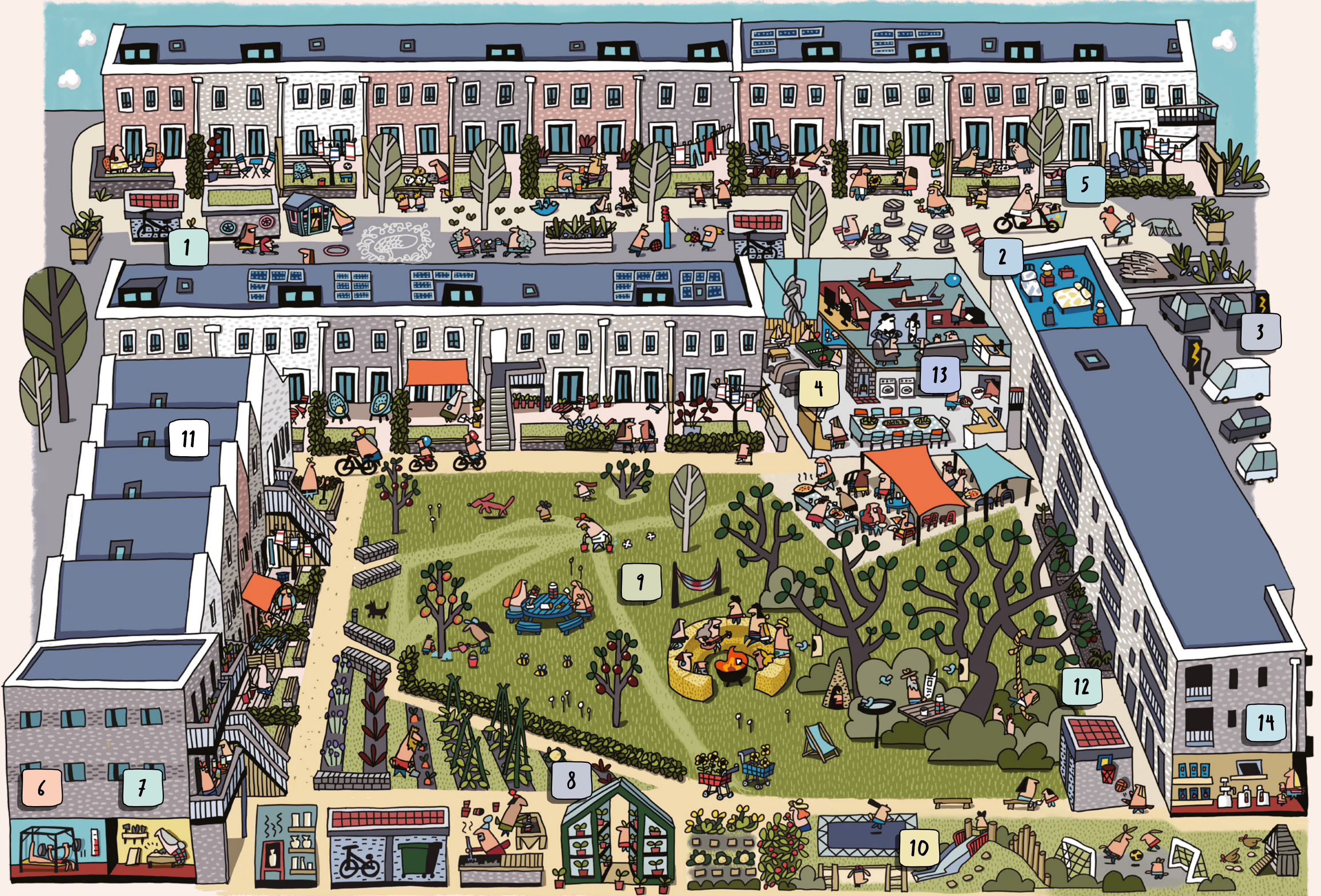


At the heart of the development, the Common House provides a large dining room and catering kitchen for weekly community meals, birthday parties and other social gatherings. It also has a children's play room and spaces for home working, group meetings, exercise classes and film nights.

5 SHARED CARGO BIKE



A shared electric cargo bike is available for residents for carrying children, shopping or bulky items. Bike parking is also provided throughout the neighbourhood, in purpose-built structures and pavement cycle hoops.



6 GYM



A community-managed on-site gym provides a cost-effective opportunity for exercise, enabling residents to save on fitness memberships and train with neighbours, without the need to store gym equipment at home.

7 WORKSHOP & TOOLSHARE



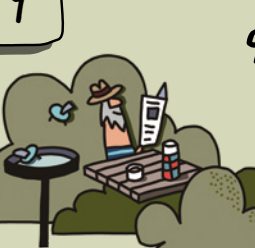
A workshop provides a space for residents to undertake hobbies and repair goods. It is also home to a collection of shared tools that can be used by residents.

8 FOOD GROWING




A dedicated food-growing area within the shared garden allows residents to grow fruit and vegetables together and to compost waste.

9 SHARED GARDEN




Homes surround a communal garden, which offers a place for residents to eat or gather outdoors, to relax and for children to play.

10 CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA




A dedicated children's play area is home to a sunken trampoline, a climbing frame, a slide and football area. Within the area of trees there are rope swings and other natural play elements.

11 LOW-ENERGY BUILDINGS



Homes are built from timber using modern methods of construction. They are triple-glazed and highly insulated and use energy-saving technologies such as air source heat pumps.

12 HEDGEHOG HOTEL



A 'hedgehog hotel' to rehabilitate local hedgehogs is located in the shared garden alongside various other nature conservation initiatives including tree planting, bird feeding, and a wildlife pond. Bird and bat bricks are incorporated throughout the neighbourhood.

13 SHARED LAUNDRY



A shared laundry facility with extra-large, low-energy appliances, offers a cheap, sustainable and convenient alternative to owning individual white goods.

14 COMMUNITY SHOP



A small, community-owned shop allows residents a way to jointly bulk-purchase organic food, toiletries and other goods.

KEY OUTCOMES

NEIGHBOURLINESS AND BELONGING

Residents of Marmalade Lane know and trust their neighbours. They meet regularly to socialise, garden, join in group activities and community events, and eat together in the Common House. Residents jointly manage the shared spaces that are central to community life. This close sense of community is what residents value most about living here.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Marmalade Lane provides a positive environment for physical and mental health. Residents use the shared gym, take part in exercise classes, and undertake informal physical activity such as gardening. Being part of a strong community reduces isolation, offering an important support network and sense of shared identity.

LEARNING

Residents benefit from the range of knowledge in the community, which is brought to all aspects of community life. They also have opportunities to learn new skills from their neighbours, such as IT, cooking, arts, crafts and gardening.

"MY FAVOURITE THING ABOUT MARMALADE LANE IS BEING ABLE TO HAVE A SOCIAL LIFE JUST A FEW STEPS FROM MY HOME AND BEING ABLE TO BE ALONE ALSO WHEN IT SUITS ME"

CONVENIENCE

Shared spaces, resources and activities within immediate access of home offer convenient solutions to daily needs, such as exercise, socialising, shopping for basic groceries and repairing bikes and household items. Shared tools, cars, laundry facilities and guest bedrooms provide practical alternatives to privately owned goods.

CHILDHOOD

Marmalade Lane offers an environment for children to thrive. Safe, shared spaces allow independent play and exploration, while being part of engaged and friendly community offers important additional support for children and their families.

CONNECTION TO NATURE

Marmalade Lane provides daily connections to nature. A large, communal garden with mature trees is used for play, relaxing, events and hosting visitors. Residents grow food in the dedicated allotment beds, with greenhouses and composting facilities and they jointly maintain and preserve habitats for wildlife.

COST OF LIVING

Marmalade Lane provides many practical, cost-saving benefits for residents. Sharing tools, white goods, a wi-fi network and other resources helps reduce daily costs. Shared guest rooms, home working spaces and a workshop allow people to live in smaller, more affordable homes. And low-energy buildings make for low energy bills.

"MY BEST THING ABOUT MARMALADE LANE IS THE COMMUNAL GARDEN, ESPECIALLY NOW WE'VE MADE IT REALLY WILD"

CARBON, ENERGY AND RESOURCES

Marmalade Lane is a low-carbon, environmentally-sensitive development. The homes have been built using modern construction methods to be highly energy efficient. The community work to collectively minimise their environmental impact through reducing waste production, water consumption and their use of private vehicles.

WIDER COMMUNITY BENEFIT

Marmalade Lane brings many wider benefits to the local area. Spaces are made available for use by local groups, and some shared resources are open to the wider community. Residents take part in a range of voluntary activities within the wider area, such as bulb planting programmes and litter picking.

"IMAGINE A WORLD WHERE HOMES WERE BUILT ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS RATHER THAN THE PROFITS OF HOUSEBUILDERS, A PLACE WHERE LAND WAS ALLOCATED WITH THE BEST LONG-TERM VALUE IN MIND, RATHER THAN FLOGGED OFF TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER, AND WHERE POLITICIANS' CLAIMS OF "CREATING COMMUNITIES" ACTUALLY RANG TRUE. IT MIGHT BE SOMETHING LIKE MARMALADE LANE IN CAMBRIDGE"

The Guardian



TOWN.

To find out more about Marmalade Lane or TOWN please visit www.wearetown.co.uk

INSIGHTS FROM MARMALADE LANE

Full report

To view the full Insights from Marmalade Lane report, please scan the QR code.

