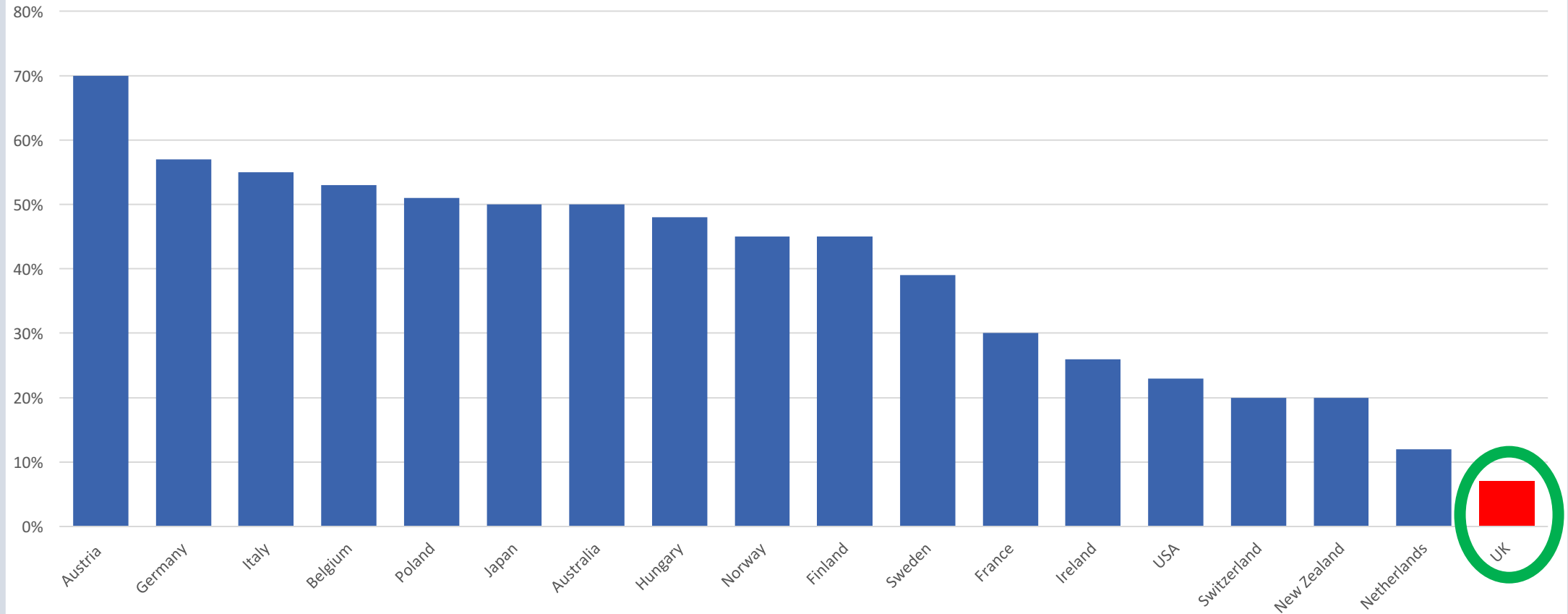


Learning from our neighbours

Ted Stevens
RUSS Trustee

We have got a lot of catching up to do

International comparison of Self-build and Custom Housebuilding



Learning from our neighbours

Themes that emerged from my
research across Europe

Self refurb
Affordable plots/land
Supported group projects



‘Self Refurb’ delivers low cost homes

*500 condemned council flats in central **Amsterdam** were taken on by a community group – delivering ‘shells’ that people finish off themselves (a modest flat costs £47k on a 40 year lease)*



100 year old school in *The Hague* has been converted into eleven homes – bare shells cost £48 -109k

'Self Refurb' delivers low cost homes

'Self Refurb' delivers low cost homes



*Supported by a charitable foundation a local community in **Hamburg** has converted this school into 34 apartments – some for sale, some for affordable rent*



'Self Refurb' delivers low cost homes



*Redundant 9,000 sq m office building in run-down industrial area of **The Hague** being split into 67 low cost apartments and workspaces. Shells available from about £55k*



'Self Refurb' delivers low cost homes



*Former school on the edge of **Berlin** transformed into 21 homes for rent, many reserved for disabled. Residents organised it themselves with help from a housing co-op*



Affordable plots/land



The Hague – the city council facilitates about 200 new self build opportunities every year



Affordable plots/land



Amsterdam – hundreds of self build homes have already been constructed across the city, and many more are now on site or in the pipeline



Affordable plots/land



Munich – more than 300 plots for local people who have been priced out of the housing market

Affordable plots/land



*Near **Bonn** the city council has facilitated plots for 300 homes - many sold at discounted prices to local families*



Affordable plots/land



Rural France – Mayors routinely deliver low cost plots to encourage young families to stay in the area



Affordable plots/land



Spain – ready-to-go building plots
available in many rural areas

Affordable plots/land

Germany – affordable plots prioritised for local people



Affordable plots/land

Australia has a long tradition of enabling modest homes in rural areas



Affordable plots/land



Uruguay – tens of thousands of low cost homes built via housing co-op

Supported group build projects



*In **Freiburg** 28 community-led building groups are building homes for 1000 people - half of the homes are affordable or low-rent*

Supported group build projects



*There are almost 100 apartments in this **Zurich** community co-op project – 80 % of the homes are at below market rents*



Supported group build projects



*Two large group build projects are underway in **Vienna** – collectively they will provide hundreds of new low cost homes*



Supported group build projects



*17 families came together to build these eco homes in **Belgium**. 40 similar projects have been built there, and another 30 are in the pipeline*

Two main approaches for groups

Practical collaborations



Sell plots individually, then suggest to the purchasers that they form a group for practical reasons. Purchasers then customise or finish their homes to match their requirements

Dedicated groups



Create a group 'upfront' that sets its goals/objectives and works collectively through the design, budgeting and construction stages

Some examples of practical collaborations

Practical collaborations - Leiden



This project delivered 350 new homes – tight plots (6m x 15m) meant plot cost was low. Great placemaking – hidden parking, pedestrian friendly landscaped streets



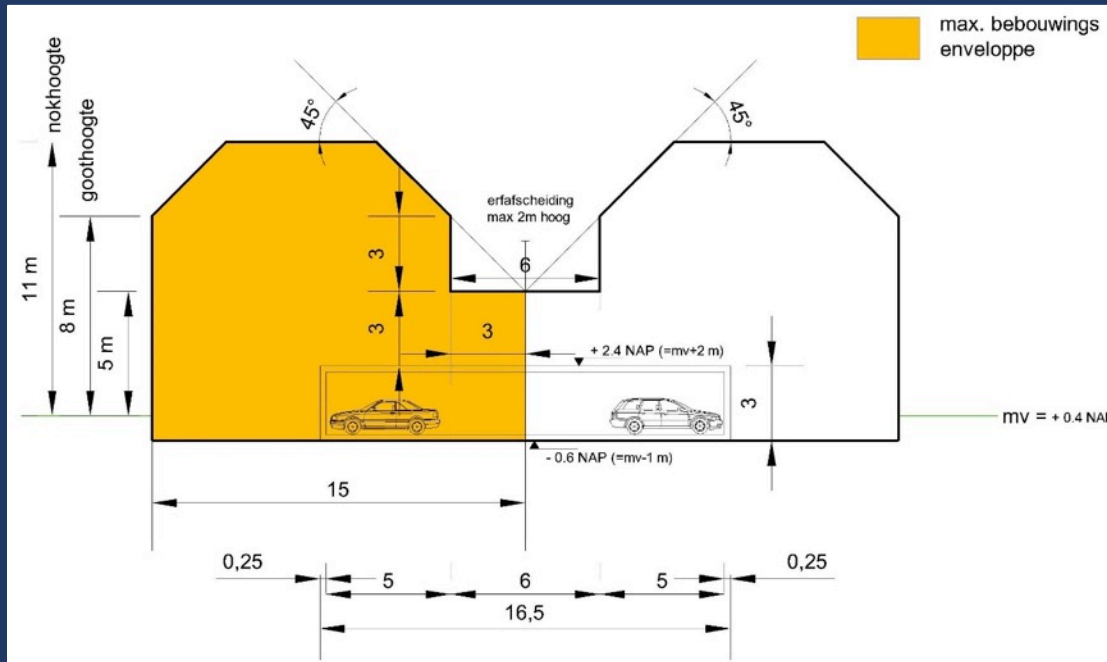
Practical collaborations - Leiden



Practical collaborations - Leiden

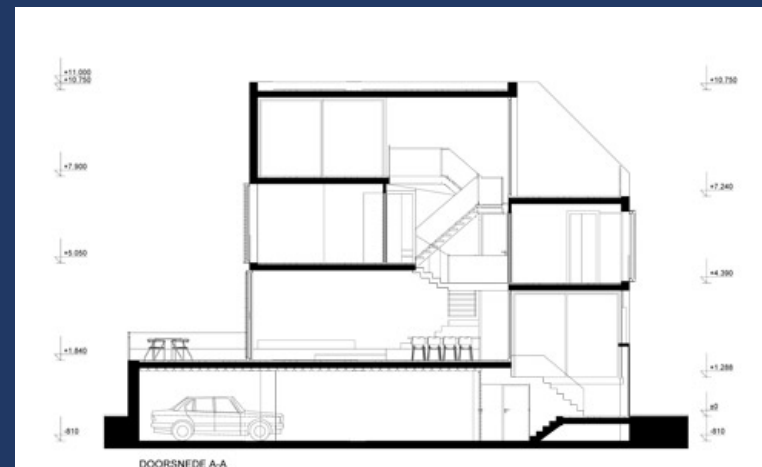


Individuals buy plots, then 18 in each terrace form a group to hire a contractor to build the main structure/shared parking. There is a Plot Passport that explains what you can/can't do with your own home.



Each owner has an architect for their own home, and hires a small builder to finish it for them

Practical collaborations - Leiden



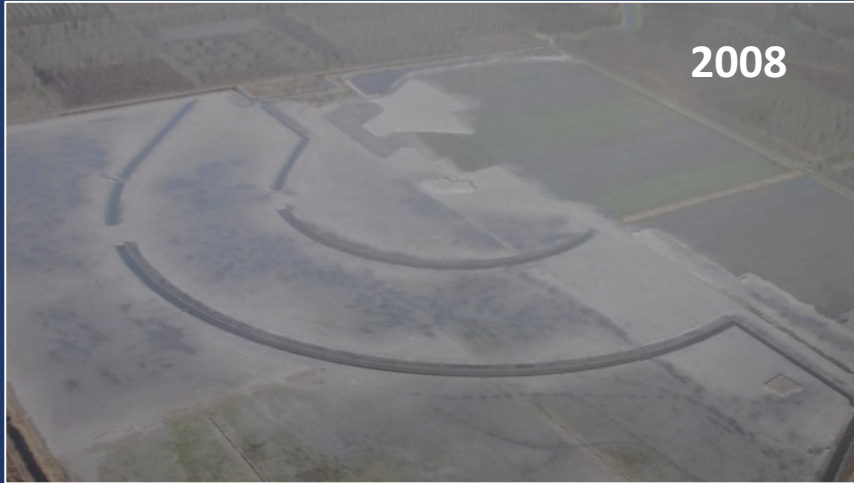
Practical collaborations – Almere



Almere – Holland's biggest New Town has been largely built by its citizens, not property developers. Thousands of homes have been constructed over the last five years



Practical collaborations – Almere

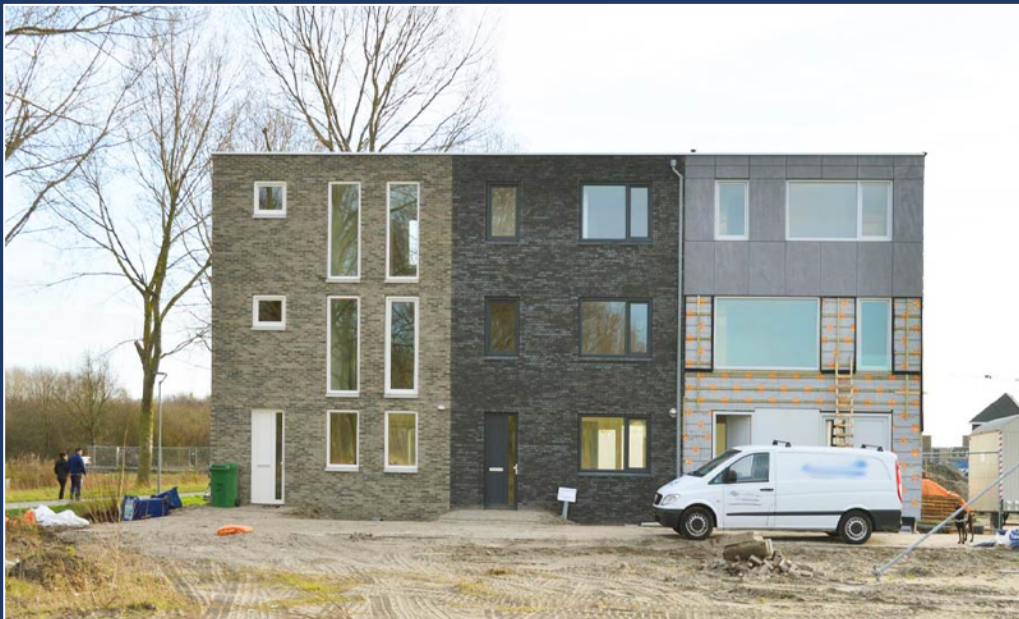


From the sea bed to
a thriving city

Practical collaborations – Almere



Practical collaborations – Almere



Most homes in Almere are individual – though the iBBa scheme offers about 30 ‘standard’ cost-effective houses that people can choose from (and build together in terraces)

Practical collaborations – Graven Hill



Almost 2,000 new self build opportunities – including modestly priced serviced plots (from about £140k), and collective projects. The first homes have now been built



Practical collaborations – Graven Hill



Practical collaborations – Graven Hill



Dedicated groups

How's it work?

Land owner/planners work out limits/requirements for a site and issue a clear Brief, price and timeframe so that groups can respond

Groups *quickly* recruit members and get themselves legally constituted

The group work out what it wants to do; lots of discussions and team building

Hires architect/project manager/facilitator to help it confirm design, costs and financial feasibility – then it submits its bid

The group that is selected then gets quotes from contractors

Contractor builds – the group's professional project manager monitors and ensures quality and cost control

Self builders move in – some may want the option to 'self finish'

Dedicated groups - Tübingen



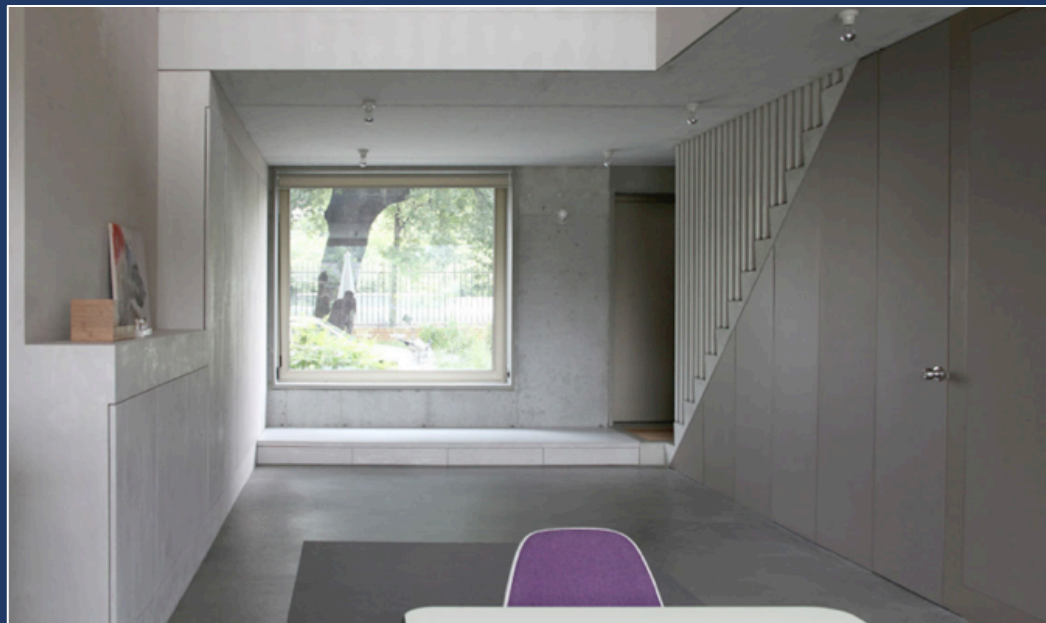
This development has been built by 25 community-led building groups, and now houses 700 people. Two earlier group projects in the city have delivered homes for more than 5,000 people



Dedicated groups - Tübingen



Dedicated groups - Berlin



*Eleven friends built this terrace.
They collectively designed a basic
shell, that each has tweaked to
suit their needs – cost £210k each*

Dedicated groups - Berlin



*45 homes
built on
urban
site with
parking
below*



*Costs
were
about
£250k
per home*



Dedicated groups – Strasbourg



Sixteen varied 'infill' collectives underway – from two to 20 homes. Each has its own theme, or passion. Most have shared facilities like a co-house, guest rooms, shared laundry, workshop and car clubs



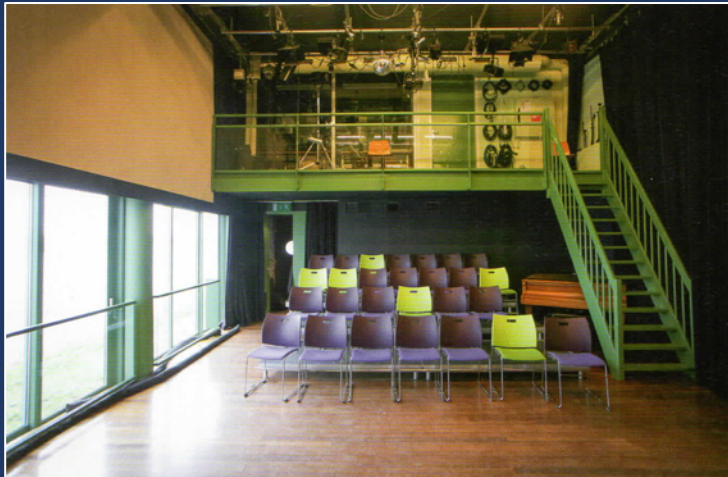
Dedicated groups – Vrijburcht



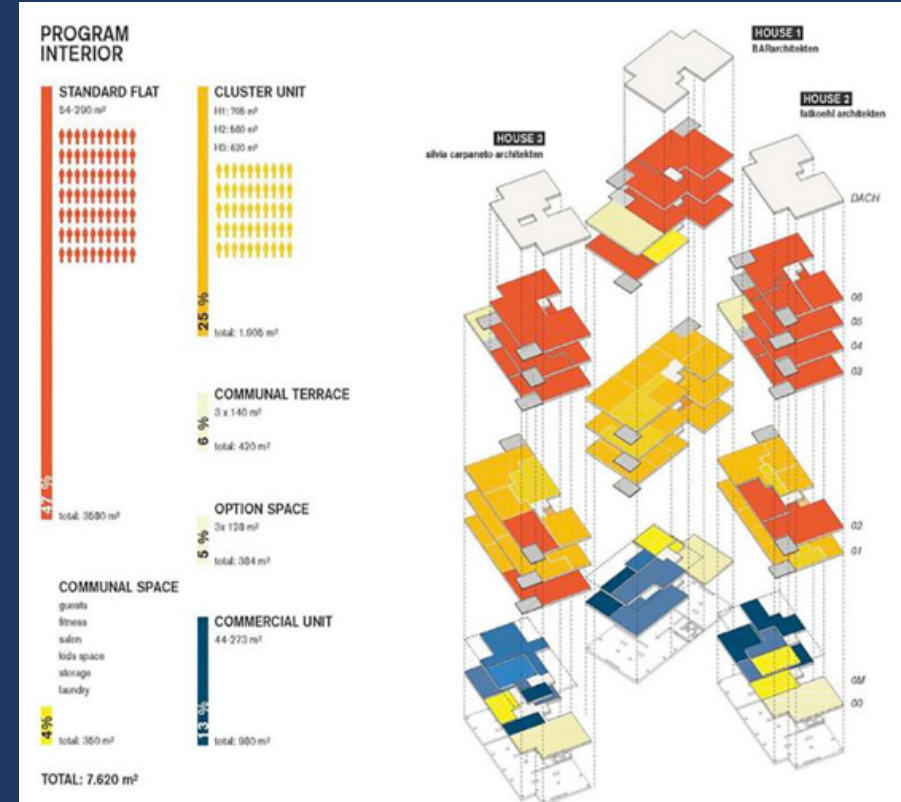
52 homes built collectively in a block around a courtyard with lots of shared facilities



Dedicated groups – Vrijburcht



Dedicated groups – Spreefeld



65 homes in three blocks – different groups and architects for each block. Includes ‘cluster flats’ and other innovative features. Some for sale, some for rent – masses of shared spaces/uses

The pros of each

Practical collaborations



PROs

- *Quick to get on site*
- *Lots of freedom to personalise own home*
- *Cost effective*

Dedicated groups



PROs

- *Usually more shared facilities*
- *Tends to 'bond' a group more*
- *Can be very cost effective*

The cons of each

Practical collaborations



CONs

- *Generally less 'group bonding' and fewer shared facilities*

Dedicated groups



CONs

- *Takes time to agree common vision/design/approach*

It's taken about 20 years to become a mainstream way of getting a home in other parts of the world....

...and it's now definitely beginning to take off here

Across the UK there are lots of new projects



Across the UK there are lots of new projects



Across the UK there are lots of new projects



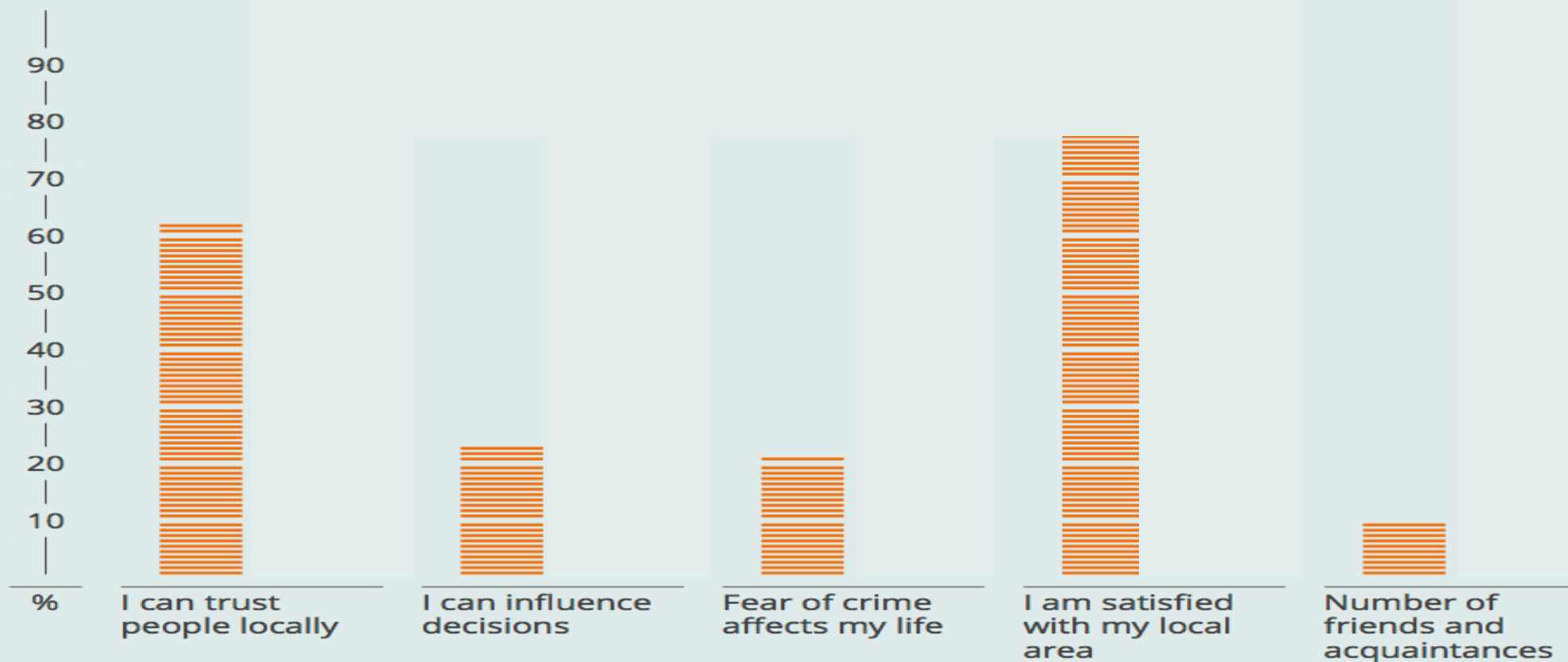
Across the UK there are lots of new projects



The benefits of this form of housing

Quality of Life Assessment, 2012

■ Bristol City as whole



Source: Exeter University and Ecomotive

The benefits of this form of housing

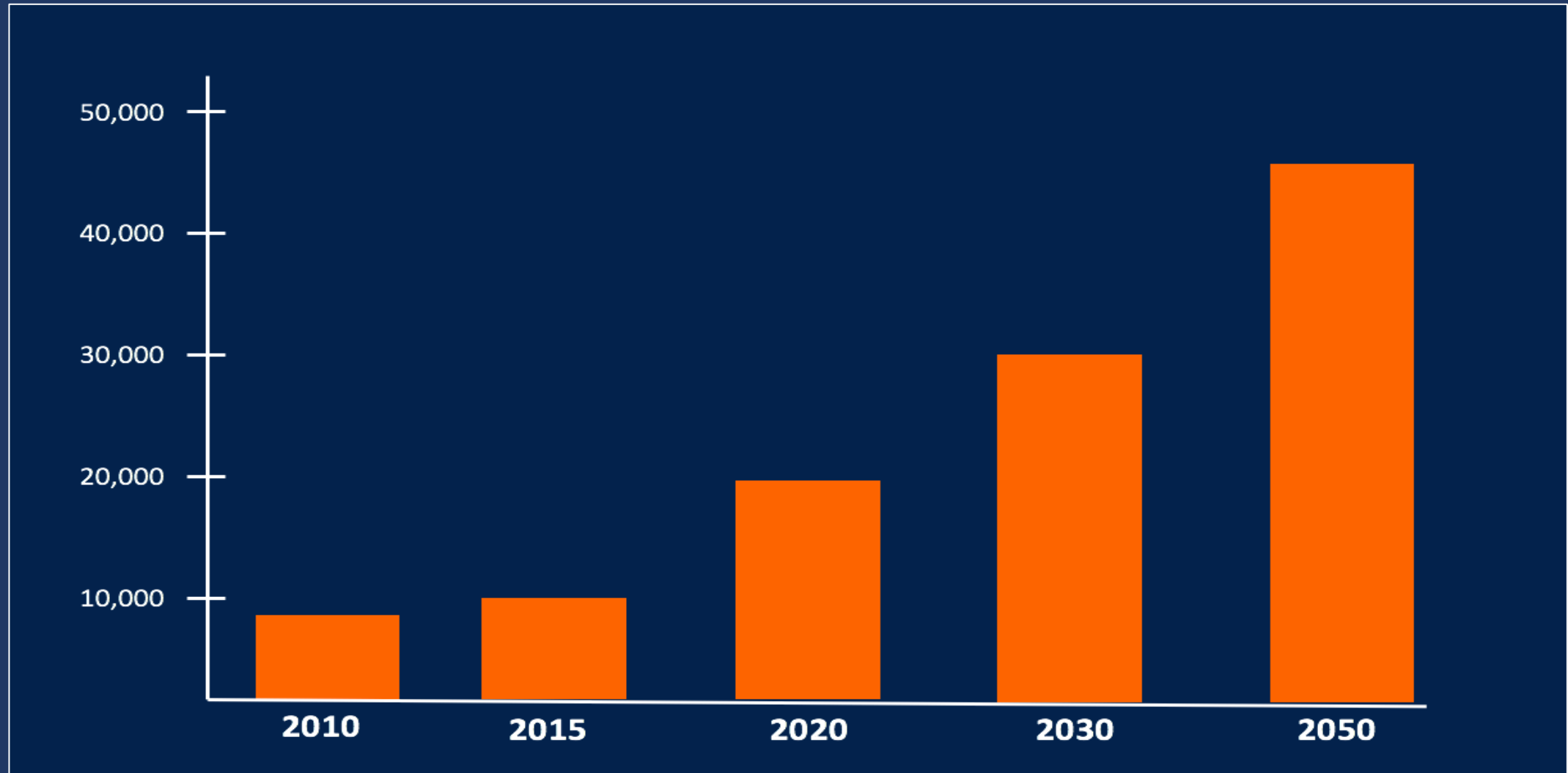
Quality of Life Assessment, 2012

■ Bristol City as whole ■ The Yard, Ashley Vale self-build community

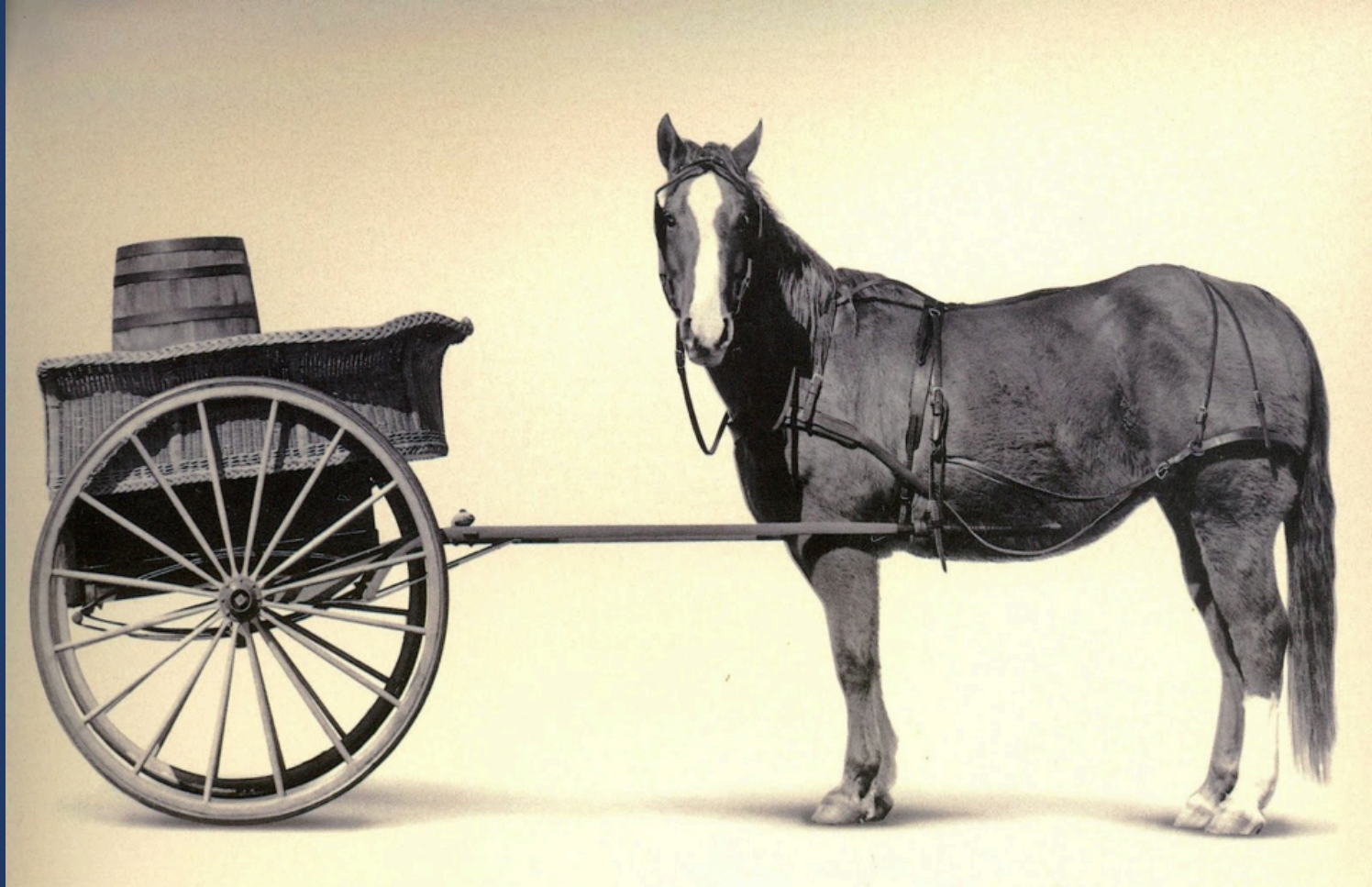


Source: Exeter University and Ecomotive

What's the potential for the UK?



Some of the main Learning Points for groups



Working out the right order to do things is vital

Some of the main Learning Points for groups

Make sure you are *all* financially viable – drop those that can't deliver the deposit/fund their bit

Hire an *independent* project facilitator to guide/advise the group. They should also help you hire the architect(s). The facilitator should **not** be the architect! (it'll end in tears)

Go to see projects that are like the one you intend to build – you'll be inspired and will learn a lot

Build your knowledge of the whole construction process – you will need to understand construction contracts, planning and legal issues, financial requirements, building procurement and a whole lot more.

Fail to prepare = prepare to fail