

# Garden cities



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Howard's *To-morrow: a peaceful path to real reform* sold enough copies to result in a second edition, *Garden Cities of To-morrow*. This success provided him the support necessary to pursue the chance to bring his vision into reality. Howard believed that all people agreed the overcrowding and deterioration of cities was one of the troubling issues of their time. He quotes a number of respected thinkers and their disdain of cities. Howard's garden city concept combined the town and country in order to provide the working class an alternative to working on farms or 'crowded, unhealthy cities'. To build a garden city, Howard needed money to buy land. He decided to get funding from "gentlemen of responsible position and undoubted probity and honour". He founded the Garden Cities Association (later known as the Town and Country Planning Association or TCPA), which created First Garden City, Ltd. in 1899 to create the garden city of Letchworth.

However, these donors would collect interest on their investment if the garden city generated profits through rents or, as Fishman calls the process, 'philanthropic land speculation'. Howard tried to include working class cooperative organisations, which included over two million members, but could not win their financial support. Because he had to rely only on the wealthy investors of First Garden City, Howard had to make concessions to his plan, such as eliminating the cooperative ownership scheme with no landlords, short-term rent increases, and hiring architects who did not agree with his rigid design plans. In 1904, Raymond Unwin, a noted architect and town planner, along with his partner Barry Parker, won the competition run by the First Garden City, Limited to plan Letchworth, an area 34 miles outside London.

Unwin and Parker planned the town in the centre of the Letchworth estate with Howard's large agricultural greenbelt surrounding the town, and they shared Howard's notion that the working class deserved better and more affordable housing. However, the architects ignored Howard's symmetric design, instead replacing it with a more 'organic' design. Letchworth slowly attracted more residents because it was able to attract manufacturers through low taxes, low rents and more space. Despite Howard's best efforts, the home prices in this garden city could not remain affordable for blue-collar workers to live in. The populations comprised mostly skilled middle classworkers. After a decade, the First Garden City became profitable and started paying dividends to its investors. Although many viewed Letchworth as a success, it did not immediately inspire government investment into the next line of garden cities.

In reference to the lack of government support for garden cities, Frederic James Osborn, a colleague of Howard and his eventual successor at the Garden City Association, recalled him saying, "The only way to get anything done is to do it yourself." Likely in frustration, Howard bought land at Welwyn to house the second garden city in 1919. The purchase was at auction, with money Howard desperately and successfully borrowed from friends.

The Welwyn Garden City Corporation was formed to oversee the construction. But Welwyn did not become self-sustaining because it was only 20 miles from London. Even until the end of the 1930s, Letchworth and Welwyn remained as the only existing garden cities. However, the

movement did succeed in emphasizing the need for urban planning policies that eventually led to the New Town movement.

Two garden cities were built using Howard's ideas: Letchworth Garden City and Welwyn Garden City, both in the County of Hertfordshire, England, United Kingdom. Howard's successor as chairman of the Garden City Association was Sir Frederic Osborn, who extended the movement to regional planning. [16] The concept was adopted again in England after World War II, when the New Towns Act caused the development of many new communities based on Howard's egalitarian ideas. The idea of the garden city was influential in the United States.

Examples are: the Woodbourne neighborhood of Boston; Newport News, Virginia's Hilton Village; Pittsburgh's Chatham Village; Garden City, New York; Sunnyside, Queens; Jackson Heights, Queens; Forest Hills Gardens, also in the borough of Queens, New York; Radburn, New Jersey; Greenbelt, Maryland; Buckingham in Arlington County, Virginia; the Lake Vista neighborhood in New Orleans; Norris, Tennessee; Baldwin Hills Village in Los Angeles; and the Cleveland suburb of Shaker Heights. In Canada, the Ontario towns of Kapuskasing, Don Mills (now incorporated into the City of Toronto) and Walkerville are, in part, garden cities.

The historic Townsite of Powell River, British Columbia is a nationally recognized historic district built upon the Garden City Movement. Greendale, Wisconsin is one of three "greenbelt" towns planned beginning in 1935 under the direction of Rexford Guy Tugwell, head of the United States Resettlement Administration, under authority of the Emergency Relief

Appropriation Act. The two other greenbelt towns are Greenbelt, Maryland (near Washington, D. C. ) and Greenhills, Ohio (near Cincinnati).

The greenbelt towns not only provided work and affordable housing, but also served as a laboratory for experiments in innovative urban planning. Greendale's plan was designed between 1936 and 1937 by a staff headed by Joseph Crane, Elbert Peets, Harry Bentley, and Walter C. Thomas for a site that had formerly consisted of 3, 400 acres (14 km<sup>2</sup>) of farmland. In Peru, the concepts of the garden city have a long tradition in urban design and have been reintroduced in its architecture more recently. The ancient city of Chan Chan (20 km<sup>2</sup> , 850 AD) in Trujillo, north of Lima, and the Inca's 12th-century city of Machu Picchu, were designed as garden cities.

Peru's modern capital, Lima, was designed as a garden city in 1535 by Spanish Conquistadors to replace its ancient past as a religious sanctuary with 37 pyramids. More recently, in 1966, the 'Residencial San Felipe' in the Lima's district of Jesus Maria was built using the Garden City concepts [19] In Sao Paulo, Brazil, several neighbourhoods were planned as Garden Cities, such as Jardim America, Jardim Europa, Alto da Lapa, Alto de Pinheiros, Jardim da Saude and Cidade Jardim (Garden City in Portuguese).

Goiania, capital of Goias state, is an example of Garden City. In Argentina, an example is Ciudad Jardin Lomas del Palomar, declared by the influential Argentinian professor of engineering, Carlos Maria della Paolera, founder of "Dia Mundial del Urbanismo" (World Urbanism Day), as the first Garden City in South America. In Australia, the suburb of Colonel Light Gardens in Adelaide, South Australia, was designed according to garden city principles. [20] So too the town of Sunshine, which is now a suburb of Melbourne in Victoria. 21]

[22] Garden city principles greatly influenced the design of colonial and post-colonial capitals during the early part of the 20th century. This is the case for New Delhi (designed as the new capital of British India after World War I), of Canberra (capital of Australia established in 1913) and of Quezon City (established in 1939, capital of the Philippines from 1948–76). The garden city model was also applied to many colonial hill stations, such as Da Lat in Vietnam (est. 1907) and Ifrane in Morocco (est. 1929).

In Bhutan's capital city Thimphu the new plan, following the Principles of Intelligent Urbanism, is an organic response to the fragile ecology. Using sustainable concepts, it is a contemporary response to the garden city concept. The Garden City movement also influenced the Scottish urbanist Sir Patrick Geddes in the planning of Tel-Aviv, Israel, in the 1920s, during the British Mandate for Palestine. Geddes started his Tel Aviv plan in 1925 and submitted the final version in 1927, so all growth of this garden city during the 1930s was merely "based" on the Geddes Plan.

Changes were inevitable. [23] The Garden City movement was even able to take root in South Africa, with the development of the suburb of Pinelands in Cape Town. Garden suburbs[edit] The concept of garden cities is to produce relatively economically independent cities with short commute times and the preservation of the countryside. Garden suburbs arguably do the opposite. Garden suburbs are built on the outskirts of large cities with no sections of industry.

They are therefore dependent on reliable transport allowing workers to commute into the city. Following Unwin's participation in the Letchworth garden city project in 1907, he moved on to work one of the first garden

suburbs, Hampstead. Years later, Unwin became very influential in government policy supporting garden suburbs as opposed to creating new independent cities. Many now view Unwin as turning his back on the garden city movement.

Garden suburbs were not part of Howard's plan and were actually a hindrance to garden city planning—they were in fact almost the antithesis of Howard's plan, what he tried to prevent. The suburbanisation of London was an increasing problem which Howard attempted to solve with his garden city model, which attempted to end urban sprawl by the sheer inhibition of land speculation due to the land being held in trust, and the inclusion of agricultural areas on the city outskirts.

Smaller developments were also inspired by the garden city philosophy and were modified to allow for residential "garden suburbs" without the commercial and industrial components of the garden city. They were built on the outskirts of cities, in rural settings. Some notable examples being, in London, Hampstead Garden Suburb and the 'Exhibition Estate' in Gidea Park and, in Liverpool, Wavertree Garden Suburb. The Gidea Park estate in particular was built during two main periods of activity, 1911 and 1934.

Both resulted in some good examples of domestic architecture, by such architects as Wells Coates and Berthold Lubetkin. Thanks to such strongly conservative local residents' associations as the Civic Society, both Hampstead and Gidea Park retain much of their original character. One unique example of a garden suburb is the Humberstone Garden Suburb in the United Kingdom by the Humberstone Anchor Tenants' Association in Leicestershire and it is the only garden suburb ever to be built by the

members of a workers' co-operative; it remains intact to the present. 30] In 1887 the workers of the Anchor Shoe Company in Humberstone formed a workers' cooperative and built 97 houses. American architect Walter Burley Griffin was a proponent of the movement and after arrival in Australia to design the national capital Canberra, produced a number of Garden Suburb estates, most notably at Eaglemont with the Glenard and Mount Eagle Estates and the Ranelagh and Milleara Estates in Victoria.