

The development and marketing of housing has always been a topic of much contention and debate and there are many views of how what people want, relates both to what they have and what they need. To form an informed view of this subject and be able to suggest suitable changes, it is necessary to look at both housing already in existence in different parts of the country and the requirements people have for their houses and the areas they live in.

This study will look in to:

1. What is already in existence in both Cambridgeshire and the Pendle District
2. The requirements for housing – both perceived and actual
3. The changes that need to be made to better suit these requirements.

Cambridge



Cambridge is the main City of Cambridgeshire, a county in East Anglia, England.



The south of England is often described as the "Rich South" as it is the richest and most developed area of the country. Almost all the major businesses, agriculture, technological and scientific research is based in this area of the UK. It is an ideal location not only because of its proximity to major ports and the Capital, but also because this area has already been made rich by farming and technology, and has been less affected by industrial decline.

Cambridge is linked very well to other cities and transport links. The M11 directly links Cambridge to London and also links to Stanstead Airport making it very easy to travel both to and from the city. There is an airport in Cambridge, but this deals mainly with freight transportation. A railway also provides links to London – merely 90 miles away – and from there it is possible to travel to all parts of the Country. Inside Cambridge is a partially reliable bus service and an effective Park and Ride to both link up different areas and attempt to deal with the congestion problems that face the city. Throughout Cambridge there are many, frequently used, cycle and pedestrian routes to again enough disuse of cars.

Cambridge one of the two internationally renowned University Cities located in the UK and this is reflected in many aspects of the city. It is mostly an urban area but there are also many green spaces and areas of parkland inside the Cambridge, and because it is built in valuable farmland the expansion of the city has been restrained. The city is generally well maintained with most accommodation being either small houses or apartments or flats with small or no gardens due to lack of space in the city. Even so, the house prices and soaring as land in this area continues to increase in value.

Employment in Cambridge is incredible high with most jobs being found in modern industries and the service sectors. Funding from the Government and the University has created some of the most famous research laboratories in the world and there is no shortage of jobs for any other well educated person. There are also many services and amenities available in Cambridge including shops, a market, cinema's, restaurants, a Hospital, Police Station and Fire Department.

Cambridge is a very busy city with a fluctuation population according to the season in relation to tourism and also the University terms. The population is predominantly which but a vast proportion of the tourists and students are Chinese, Japanese and Korean as well as many others coming from other European backgrounds. The numbers of students mean that generally the population of Cambridge is very young and therefore many of the shops and cafés are angled to appeal to this market. Because it is so busy, there is also high level of crime in Cambridge but this is, on the whole, dealt with effectively. Tourism in Cambridge also brings in a large revenue.

However, like all cities there are many contrasts within Cambridge itself:

- Urban redevelopment means that there are Council flats built opposite million pound properties.
- Because of the distinction in property values, like all cities, there is little mixing between people with different incomes.
- The modern satellite towns also contain derelict buildings.
- There are many small modern houses standing directly opposite large estate properties.

Pendle District

The Pendle district is the valley South of Pendle Hill (to the North) in East Lancashire.



The Pendle District is very remote; located along a river valley at the base of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. There are many hills meaning there is a lack of communication routes and the major road is the M65 running up the Valley. The area is very open in parts with settlements surrounded by bare moor-land but the urban centres are densely built up.

Industrial decline in this area has led to many development difficulties and now a vast number of houses, warehouses and factories are derelict and most areas are dirty and littered with rubbish. Loss of employment and lack of communications means that people have moved away to find jobs and the population has declined. There is a distinct lack of services available for the people who remain in these areas and many basic services such as the sewer system need major repair work and are in danger or collapse. This has made house prices in the area plummet and has then led to large percentage South Asian population as it is the custom in these cultures to buy a property outright as a dowry for a bride. The low houses prices in these areas means that this is actually possible. Despite the decline the Government is now trying to rebuild areas and transform this district to a place where it is considered a luxury to live in.

There are again many differences within the Pendle District itself

- Many areas are derelict and abandoned, but some have been redeveloped and renovated and are now very prosperous areas.
- There is a complete mix of urban industry and open countryside.

Conclusions

There is a mixture of qualities of live and stages of development in both Cambridge and the Pendle District but on the whole Cambridge is far more affluent and better developed. Redevelopment is occurring in the Pendle District but it is much harder to fund.

Cambridge is smaller than the Pendle District and generally provides a much better quality of life for its inhabitants. There is a varied mix of faiths and cultures because of the University and people from different backgrounds even if the native population is predominantly white. The housing and properties are generally very small but there is a wide range and also a variety of Local Authority, Housing Association and privately owned houses.

The Pendle District, on the other hand, is much larger but generally there are fewer services and amenities available for residents. The population is mostly Islamic coming from a Pakistani background because of the 'buy outright' traditions. Properties are generally larger than in Cambridge, but they are less likely to provide expected facilities such as inside toilets or be structurally sound.

Housing Requirements

The main aim of property developers and building contractors is to make a profit meaning they wish to build a house for as little as possible and sell it for the largest sum of money they can get away with. However, this means that while houses always suit demand, they are not always particularly practical for the occupants needs.

Modern houses tend to:

- Be small because land prices are so expensive and the majority of people can not afford large houses in the areas they would like to live.
- Have small gardens for the same reason.
- Have multiple bathrooms because this has now become the fashion.
- Have small rooms with little room for storage as minimalist styles are also fashionable
- Be built so that the house can be seen and with strong locks and doors so that it is a hard target for property crimes and the buyer feels safer.
- Have some form of conversion or extension to maximise usable space on the property.
- Be 'open plan' so people can move easily between rooms and there is a feeling of continuity.

However, this is not entirely what people require in a home. For instance, whilst minimalist styles may be fashionable, the majority of people can not just throw out most of their possessions for the sake of decoration and so space for storage is necessary. People do not need two bathrooms unless they have a big family, and even then a small wet room instead would be more practical. People also need to be able to rely on the house remaining sound so that they do not have to pay for structural work so materials need to be strong and durable, but also cheap to keep the price down.

My family live where we do for a variety of reasons:

- The house is cheap
- It is just big enough for us and has room to store (most) of our possessions.
- It is situated on the edge of the Council Estate away from the majority of the trouble.
- There is a large open space in front of the house giving the feeling of space.
- It is close to services and amenities as well as good transport links to the city centre
- Well made a suitable for conversion/extension work
- It has a front and a back garden giving some definable outdoor space both for games and for relaxation.

A house in Whitefield, Nelson would not fit many of the perceived or actual requirements for modern houses. It is unlikely to be structurally sound and the lack of basic amenities means that people have no way of living at today's standards. The houses are small and with one brick thick walls and no central heating they will loose heat quickly. The sewer systems are on the brink of collapse and there is so much vandalism and so little care taken of occupied houses that it seems very likely that the area is not particularly safe. This is backed up by the fact that one of the play-parks in the ward next to Whitefield has a brick wall and metal bars around it to protect the children. The only advantage to these houses is that they are extremely cheap.

Considerations for Development

There are many other forms of redevelopment that can occur in towns and cities instead of building completely new settlements. These include:

- Housing Associations buying (either from city councils or off the market) large areas of disused property, and either rebuilding the entire area or refurbishing all the properties in the area on a large scale to create new communities with comfortable, environmentally friendly houses with all modern conveniences.
- The conversion of old factory buildings into luxury flats and apartments. These buildings often have riverside views and once refurbished can have quite an attraction as novelty homes.
- The selling of houses to private investors, who will make a house individual and more likely to attract buyers because of the time and consideration that will have been put into it if the contractor wishes to make a profit.
- Provide funding for businesses to set up sites in less well developed areas to attract more house-hunters to the area and slowly improve the area.
- Provide other incentives for people to move into an area such as education facilities, public transport, parks, leisure facilities, shops and other services and amenities.

When developing new areas, the most important things to consider:

- The market you wish to sell the houses to, large families will want to buy large houses with space for children to play.
- The services the buyers of houses in the area will require.
- How safe the area is perceived as being, people are less likely to move into an area covered in litter and badly vandalised, particularly if they live alone or have children.
- The amount of storage, or room for storage, there is in the house itself, if people can not fit their stuff into a house they will not want to live in it.
- The quality of the house to start with, if the house is bad quality then people are unlikely to take care of it which then paints a negative image to any prospective buyers in the area.
- The ease with which people can travel out of the area and the number of jobs available locally for people of all skill levels.