

WHY RESIDENTS IN LONDON SHOULD EMBRACE REGENERATION PROJECTS

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Resistance to Regeneration

To shake the negative connotations of regeneration, many professionals use the phrase ‘place-making’. The reason for these resentful feelings towards the word regeneration comes from the belief that local residents will not benefit from regeneration in the community.

However, there are many reasons why these communities in London should embrace the ‘place-making’ process. In 2017, Sadiq Khan revised the London Plan to deliver more affordable housing and provide low-cost workspaces for small businesses. The plan, when adopted, seeks to ensure that London is:

1. an internationally competitive and successful city.
2. a city that meets the challenges of economic and population growth.
3. a city of diverse, strong, secure and accessible neighbourhoods.
4. a city that delights the senses.
5. a city that becomes a world leader in improving the environment.
6. a city where it is easy, safe and convenient for everyone to access jobs, opportunities and facilities.

Ensuring that London is considering local communities while regeneration occurs through the capital is crucial. However, it’s just as important that these communities embrace this change. Planning Insight has highlighted three ways that regeneration can improve local communities for residents.

The Benefits

New and improved schools and surgeries.

Renovated healthcare centres and schools lead to a forward thinking and healthy community. The regeneration in Barnet introduced 10 new schools across primary, secondary and higher education levels. Therefore, providing a greater opportunity for employment & apprenticeship opportunities.

Job opportunities.

The regeneration activity for the Olympic Games created 110,000 new jobs in East London with another 125,000 forecasted in the next 12 years, a 500% increase on original predictions. Subsequently, new neighbourhoods, business centres and cultural areas were built, transforming previously run-down spaces of wasteland into areas of culture, sport, business and education.

Disposable income from middle class residents that move to the area.

According to 2016 figures from the Office for National Statistics, the average Londoner has £27,151 in disposable income. This cash will not exclusively be spent in newly developed high-end chains; older businesses with high cultural value can also see business improve. Liverpool's Albert Dock illustrates this point as the heritage site has profited from regeneration to the area. The building was previously in a state of decline yet now receives around six million visitors every year.

Successful Regeneration

It's clear that communities can thrive alongside regeneration. However, there are essential factors that should be considered when designing proposals. The speed of the changes, the nature of the changes and consulting the community must be communicated at the beginning and throughout the regeneration process. Resident's ideas and stories must be understood to deliver a sustainable environment and encourage successful regeneration.