



## Letchworth Gardens Quarter

### The city is unfurling a new branch into the countryside - Gardenia.

The inspiration behind this new place is a connection with nature and Letchworth's founding vision of a city of gardens.

And like a branch, its spine is its lifeblood - in this case brought to life by walkers, joggers, cyclists, electric buses and other sustainable vehicles travelling along a linear garden - going to work, going home, going to the community hub, going to school or simply going for a walk. It's also where food is grown, literally a feeder route.

Peeling away from this are the 'leaves' - clusters of homes grouped around a small green space, their roofs designed to either harvest food or harvest light, like photosynthesis.

At the community heart of this new place is a tall vertical garden, on the city's axis - re-establishing the original Letchworth geometry. A landmark visible from the city and raised viewing point to look back onto the city. For the 1st time the city's garden masterplan structure is revealed. Surrounded by a school, community and business hub, city farm, retirement village, energy centre, transport interchange and garden centre - this is a place literally bursting with life, colour and people; a garden place at the centre of a place of gardens.

At the core of the concept is intergenerational living, those of all ages alongside, drawing and learning from each other, along with a new model in sustainable movement, a movement club, driven by smartphone access to allow booking and sharing of low carbon modes of travel. Use of the sustainable movement club will secure the option to drive through the site and exit to the south, something which would be restricted to sole occupants in private cars. Naturally, those on the e-bus or cycling will always have priority.

#### MICRO CLUSTERS

These are the smallest clusters in the masterplan - in some cases just 5 or 6 homes around a green / blue garden. These are completely pedestrian spaces, with cars parked in a small area at the entrance.

#### ENERGY CENTRE

An energy centre offers district heating to all of the homes and community buildings. It is efficiently located in the centre of the masterplan and conveniently accessed from the main approach road, meaning deliveries can take place without creating any traffic in the residential areas.

#### COMMUNITY AND LOCAL BUSINESS HUB

This building offers flexible space for local businesses, growers and makers, as well as a village-hall type space. It is the main hub of activity and its café fronts directly onto the market space - a perfect place for parents to wait before collecting their kids from school. There are also workshop spaces, a creche, click + collect, community fridge, storage facilities and even some B&B accommodation.

#### VERTICAL GARDEN

At the heart of the masterplan, a garden. Not large in footprint but stretching skywards, a vertical botanic garden that re-establishes the city's original strong axial geometry set out by Parker and Unwin. A landmark visible from the city's main Broadway but also a high level viewing point to look back onto the city, for the 1st time since its creation - a fresh perspective on visionary ideas developed 115 years ago. This striking planted structure will become the emblem for the development, literally a natural focus at the heart of the community.

#### CITY FARM AND KITCHEN

This complex has community growing areas, polytunnels, bees, goats, chickens and some livestock. The kids and teachers love it. And many of the retirement village residents volunteer here. A small restaurant sells delicious locally grown food.

#### MARKET SPACE

This space is at the centre of the community heart. It is the place where things happen and where people meet. It's where a local farmers market is held on a Saturday morning and also a place to sit in the sun with a coffee and watch people come and go. With the vertical garden it creates a strong sense of arrival into the development. This whole area is free of traffic

#### RETIREMENT VILLAGE

The retirement village ensures there is all-day activity at the heart of the masterplan. With pleasant views out to open countryside behind, and right next to the community and transport hub it is very conveniently located for its residents. Not least also being next to the garden centre and city farm and kitchen but also the school, ensuring all generations are at the heart of the site.

#### PRIMARY SCHOOL

The primary school has been positioned so that it is next to the playing fields, with sheltered south-facing informal play spaces. It is also opposite the retirement village - old and young together. The school children love being near the city farm and the vertical garden is a constant source of inspiration and wonder.

#### GARDEN CENTRE AND NURSERY

What could be more appropriate to have in the heart of Gardenia than a garden centre. It's one of the reasons the retirement village next door is so popular! Compost is also produced here with all the masterplan clippings and is free to residents to collect.

#### THE LINEAR GARDEN

This is the main movement spine of the masterplan - used by wildlife, walkers, joggers, cyclists, electric buses and other vehicles; all travelling along this linear parkland - going to work, going home, going to the community hub, going to school or simply going for a walk. It is a made up of a patchwork of green and blue space - a boulevard, pocket parks, allotments, swales, bbq and picnic areas, wetland areas, rain gardens, sensory gardens, herb gardens, ponds, orchards, nuttens, wildflower meadows, arboretums, fitness trails and children's play areas.

#### THE PLAYING FIELDS

The 6 pitches on the playing fields have been slightly repositioned to introduce a new boulevard link to the community heart, reconnecting to the original garden city axis. The play areas have been relocated to the boulevard link

#### SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE

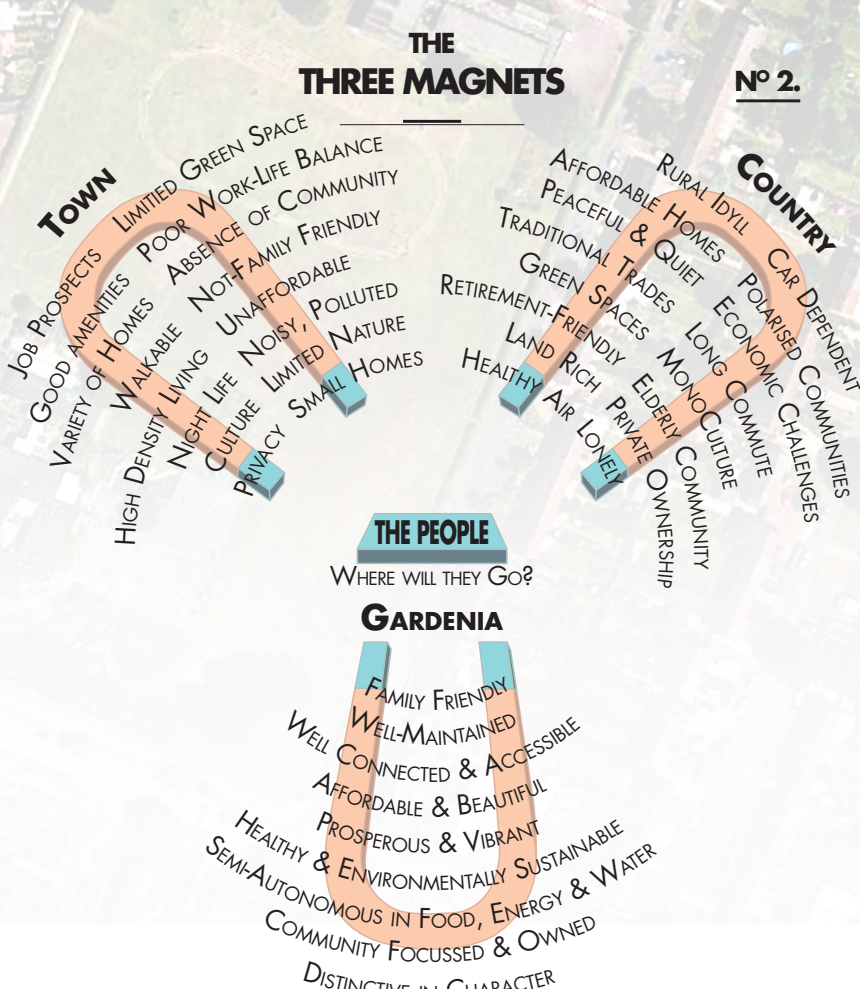
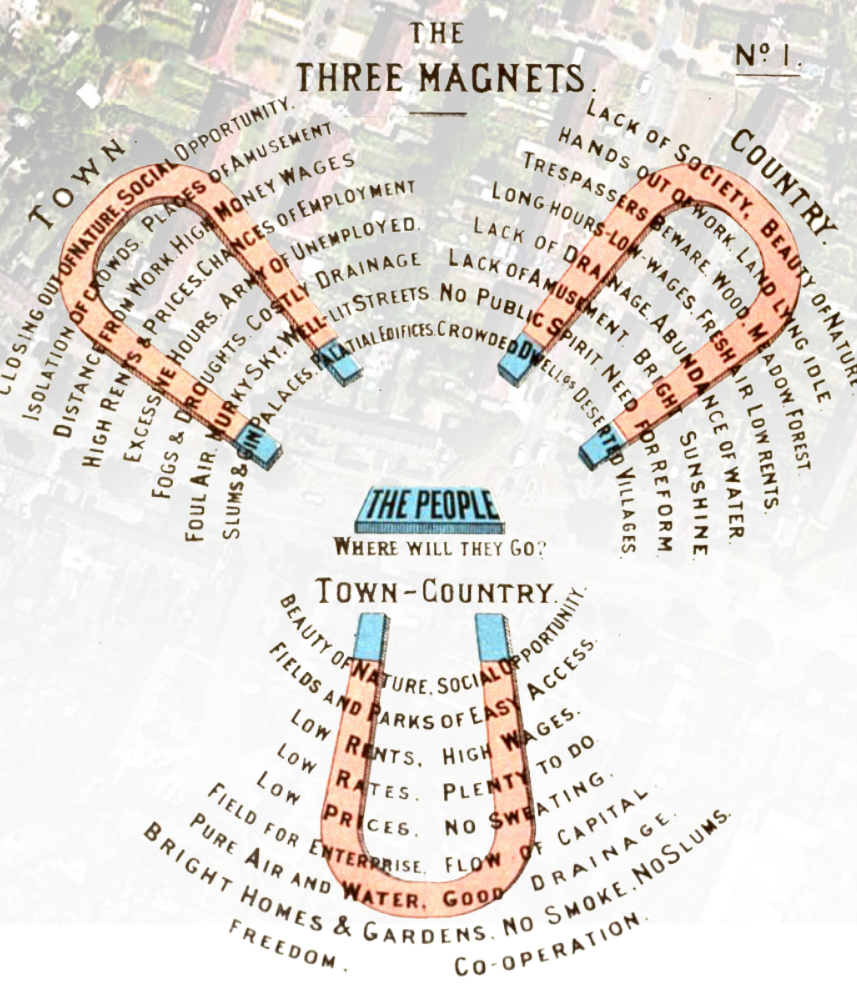
The home of the sustainable travel club, housing hire bikes of all types, tuk tuks, electric charging stations, car club bays, electric buggies and is where the electric bus leaves from. Its solar roof contributes towards powering the various transport options.

Connection to green way

Connection to green way

#### WILD MEADOW AREA

This area, coupled with the meadow to the west of the playing pitches, is for residents that enjoy looking onto green spaces but don't necessarily want a garden to look after. Each home facing onto the meadow will have a deck that juts out into a landscape that is managed to be a haven for wildlife. A public boardwalk cuts through these two spaces linking the playing pitches with the linear garden.



NATURE INSPIRED

