**The 15-minute city approach to post-pandemic house building**

The next big challenge facing the building industry will be meeting the demands of the public for homes that fit in to post-pandemic living with greater homeworking and emphasis on lifestyle rather than location, it is claimed.

Dan Grimshaw from Beam Development says the ‘15-Minute City’ principal – a new approach to urban design, in which all city residents can meet most of their needs within a short walk or bicycle ride from their homes – could offer a solution.

“It is possible cities will never return to the way they were before the virus struck and we are now looking at the way buildings are being used in terms of amenities and spaces and examining what people want from the places they live in,” said Dan.

“Even before Covid people were wanting to spend more time at home as technology allowed them to do that, but that has been normalised during lockdown and accelerated, hence the need for proper home office space to accommodate that.

“If the 15-Minute City takes off as a concept it will chime with people looking for more flexibility in their lives and who want to fit their jobs around their home life with space to work from home and, if possible, the space for a home office.

“Creating that space, either through an extension or re-purposing rooms is vital.”

Dan says building design is already starting to change with projects such as the Brabazon development being built at the former BAE airfield at Filton, near Bristol, already adopting the new ready-made community model.

“One of the positives of the pandemic is that it has made people feel more connected with their neighbourhoods and highlighted the need for a diverse range of local businesses and services, with better street space for pedestrians,” added Dan.

“Lockdown turned us all into locals overnight, connecting with high street shops and cafes on the doorstep in a way many of us had never done before. With restrictions lifting, it could be time to try new approaches to unlock growth and help reshape our communities for the better.”

The 15-Minute City idea was developed by Sorbonne Professor Carlos Moreno and advocates the creation of a city of neighbourhoods, in which workers find everything they need in terms of work, retail and leisure within 15 minutes of their home.

Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo has made the 15-minute goal a focus of her seven years in office and is creating 900 miles of bike lanes in the city. She is also converting schoolyards throughout the city into round-the-clock public playgrounds.

**ENDS**

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