



Research Ideas 2024

Future Places Studio are looking for partners to deliver research into the pertinent topics of our time, to *provoke new thinking and unearth new possibilities* for our cities.

From small ideas to long-form proposals, this is an opportunity to prod, probe and stimulate.

We'd love to hear from you if you'd like to explore any of these ideas with us further, or if you have any other topics that calls for attention.

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For more information, visit:

www.futureplacesstudio.co.uk



1. Urban Wilding

UK cities suffer from a lack of nature, and disadvantaged neighbourhoods are disproportionately affected. To combat nature inequality, the UK Government has introduced an Environmental Improvement Plan to ensure that every UK household is located within a 15-minute walking distance of green space or water. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) obligations, which will come into force next year, will go some length to infuse more nature into urban neighbourhoods but a more concerted effort is required to bring about a step change. How can planners, developers and placemakers play their part in amplifying and redefining urban nature to pave the way for functional landscapes that can support the complex ecosystems that are vital for the health of the city, urban wildlife and people?

2. London Learning City

London has 18 universities, many of which are world leading and sit at the heart of London's evolving knowledge clusters such as King's Cross, SC1 and White City. In addition, London increasingly features universities from across the UK that are creating 'satellite campuses' to attract international students. As London continues its rich history of being a 'learning city' how can the city ensure that it adopts approaches that optimises benefits for students, local communities and the wider economy?





3. Food and the City

Food sits at the heart of many cultures and communities but our dependency on industrial processes and global supply chains has created a disconnect between us and the food we eat. Moreover, the cost-of-living crisis has illustrated the economic gaps that exist between people; the prohibitive cost of healthy eating amongst low-income families can impact obesity levels, long-term chronic illness and mental health. The urban environment has a role to play; creative incentives across the world showcase that even dense urban neighbourhoods have the capacity for food growing. Coupled with a well-curated blend of food outlets, developments have the potential to combat food insecurity and boost the health of citizens whilst delivering a vibrant environment with a unique appeal.

4. Co-Housing

Co-housing is not just compact apartment living for millennials. With a growing population of senior citizens and single households on the rise, alternative models of living and new typologies can offer solutions to rising property prices and chronic loneliness. Across the continent, inter-generational and communal living with a focus on owner adaptation and customisation of private and shared spaces has generated happier communities with an increased sense of belonging and quality of life. Shared gardens, social-cultural facilities, co-working spaces, studios and guest accommodation can offer more flexibility without compromising private living spaces. How can we redefine the established principles of co-housing to address the cost-of-living and loneliness crises that are on the rise in the UK?





5. Circularity

The UK construction industry is the largest consumer of natural assets in the country. In a world of finite resources, we must change the established take-make-waste model to preserve natural assets and create cost effective solutions that allow us to live within planetary boundaries. Circularity is a simple concept; instead of discarding a product at the end of its life, it is fed back into the supply chain as a renewable resource. But how can circularity benefit the construction industry? What if we design buildings that can be wholly or partially dismantled and reconfigured? Where individual components can be returned to the supplier and reused again? Where waste becomes a valuable resource, and end-of-life products are remanufactured and granted a new lease of life.

6. Progress & History

As the built environment sector brings forward more schemes to enable the industries of the future to grow and thrive, we believe the places and cities that will have the broadest appeal will be those that manage to mix progress and innovation with history and heritage. In London, locations such as King's Cross, White City and Earl's Court have been or are being transformed with progressive and exciting masterplans that place innovation at their core. However, each of these locations have a rich history and heritage that needs to be retained and celebrated. How can cities embrace the future whilst ensuring that the past isn't lost? But equally how can we ensure that progress isn't constrained by history? In essence, what does the right combination of analogue and digital look like?

