

# Placemaking at the Heart

Creating healthy  
happy places  
for future  
generations



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As a business, as a team, as individuals,  
we want to be proud of the places we deliver.

We want to know that we have played our part in  
providing great places for people to live and spend  
time in, and that we have delivered them in the  
right way.

We are committed to putting place at the heart  
of everything we do, and to continually challenge  
ourselves to do better.

**Ben Phillips, Development Director**



# INTRODUCTION

Lands Improvement, as master developer and land promoter, is in the privileged position of being able to significantly impact the places people live in - and their day-to-day lives.

It is our intention for this impact to be as positive an experience as possible, and this means playing a leading role in creating places where people love to live - now and in the long-term.

This document outlines our approach to placemaking. Our influence comes from the places we develop, the people we work with and existing research into the way placemaking is evolving.

Everything we develop – including our tools, processes and ways of working are focused on remaining true to creating great places for people to enjoy living in.

**Placemaking is central to what we do as a company.**



# OUR GOAL

## Healthy Happy Places

How do we define the places we want to deliver?

**Healthy Happy Places** encapsulates our ambitions for the places we make and the people who live there.

By this we mean:



Places with dynamic and thriving public spaces



Places that are inclusive for all generations and demographics



Places that make healthy and sustainable ways of living the natural choice



Places that protect, preserve and enhance nature

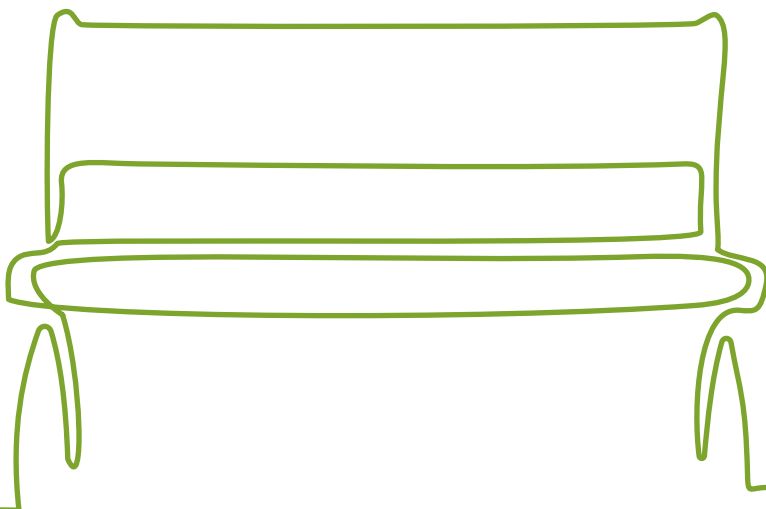


Places with engaged and proud communities

**'These are our Placemaking pillars'**



# HOW WE GET THERE



Our 5 pillars are supported by our Foundations, describing how we work and the business ethos that will make our vision the reality.

# OUR FOUNDATIONS

## TAKING A LONG-TERM VIEW

We look for the best long-term solutions, whether that's design and physical longevity or long-term management and community prosperity. How something will look or function well into the future is core to our decision-making process, as is understanding the long-term impact of every decision we make today.



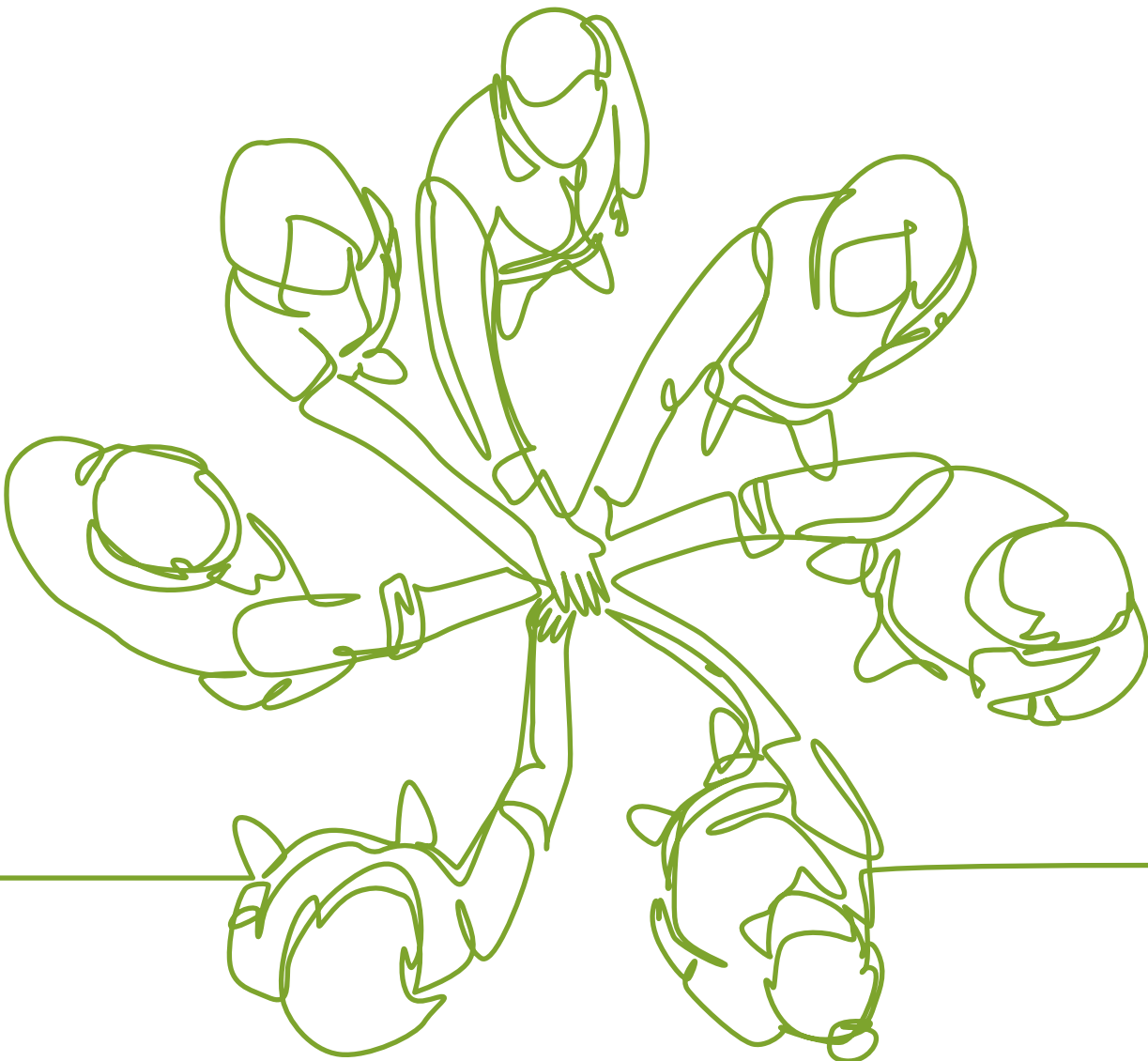
## FRAMEWORKS AND EVIDENCE BASE

We take an evidence-based approach when delivering healthy, happy places. This keeps our focus on the right path and ensures we continually learn and develop.

Frameworks and guidance are in place and updated to ensure our approach applies consistently across all projects, and more

importantly that our teams (internally and externally) understand the reasons behind it.

Good placemaking is about much more than ideas on paper. It is about how we work, how we engage and how we deliver and manage our projects from day one, and how we continue to learn and adapt along the way.



## FRAMEWORK AND EVIDENCE BASE

### The Design and Placemaking Framework

Evidence collated and summarised for us by Create Streets, a built environment social enterprise and independent research institute, about the impact of urban design on health and happiness has informed our Design and Placemaking Framework.

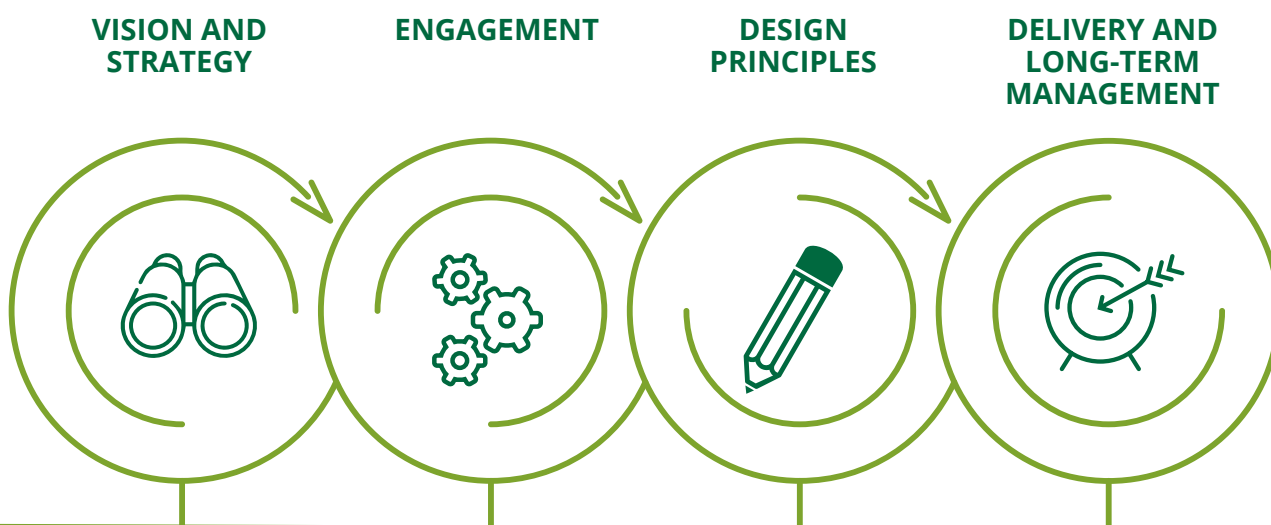
The Lands Improvement Design and Placemaking Framework summarises the principles upon which healthy, happy places are created.

The framework guides our team and consultants who integrate the principles throughout each project.

It articulates the starting point for the brief, the framework articulates 'what we want to do and why' while providing the evidence for why we feel this is the right approach.



**Expanding on design, the framework describes how we go about our work and how we deliver for the long term, including:**



More details about the framework on page 18 >>

## FRAMEWORK AND EVIDENCE BASE

### Active Environments

A core theme is to maximise the health benefits from open spaces and strategic infrastructure through activity.

We have partnered with activation experts to work with our project teams to provide advice and best practice from around the world.



## COMMITMENT TO INVEST

Early investment in placemaking will maximise our ability to create the places of our aspirations.

This investment can be realised in many forms: from open public spaces to community buildings, local amenities to early sustainable transport options, tree planting to biodiversity creation, on site or off site. Even though individual developments may differ, the principles supporting them will stand firm.





## TEAM, TIME & RESOURCE

We invest in physical infrastructure – and, more importantly perhaps, we are committed to investing our time to explore, deliberate, challenge and innovate.

Placemaking sits at the core of how we approach all our projects, at all stages, both within Lands Improvement and associated consultant teams. Teams are challenged and encouraged to think broadly and to constantly look for ways to improve what we do.

We are committed to working with the best place-oriented consultants, who naturally align with our vision, who push and challenge us to set aspirational goals and who help us work out how to achieve them.

We prevail amongst a world of knowledge, and we challenge ourselves to seek it out and to keep learning and adapting:

- **Best practice and training** – Place and design are a core part of the Lands Improvement CPD programme both through formal sessions and by learning through site visits. We associate with agencies and organisations with specialist knowledge and research from which we can learn and incorporate in our work.
- **Champions** – people within Lands Improvement are responsible for leading on various aspects of place as included in the framework, to be the experts in that area and to offer support on our projects.

# OUR PILLARS

## PLACES WITH DYNAMIC AND THRIVING PUBLIC SPACES

Open space and the public realm form a large component of all our sites. Their impact on the health and happiness of the community is enormously positive when designed and delivered in the right way.



We are committed to making these spaces work as hard as they can to maximise the benefits:



Our spaces will be accessible, safe, and interesting



Our spaces will be meeting spaces, eating spaces, places to gather and celebrate, places for peace and quiet and time out



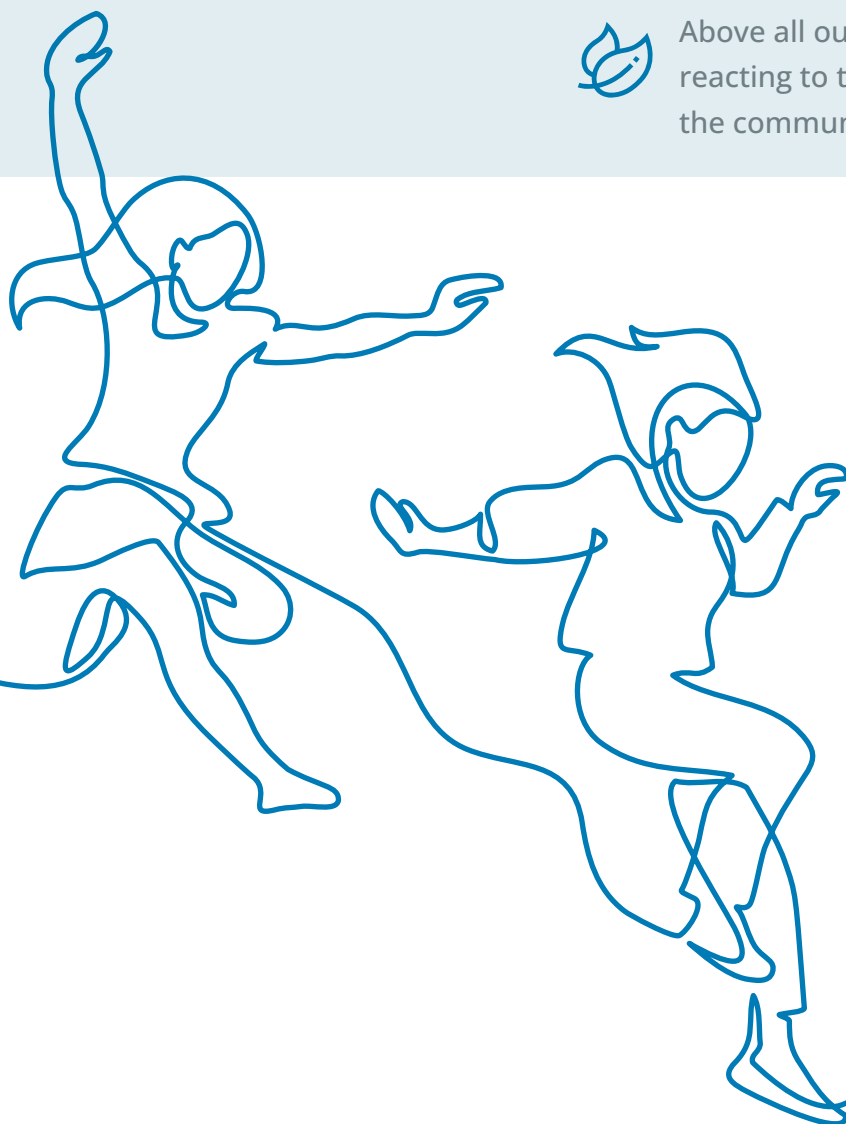
Our spaces will deliver for the needs of those who want to be active, as well as those who can't be



Our spaces will be green and biodiverse



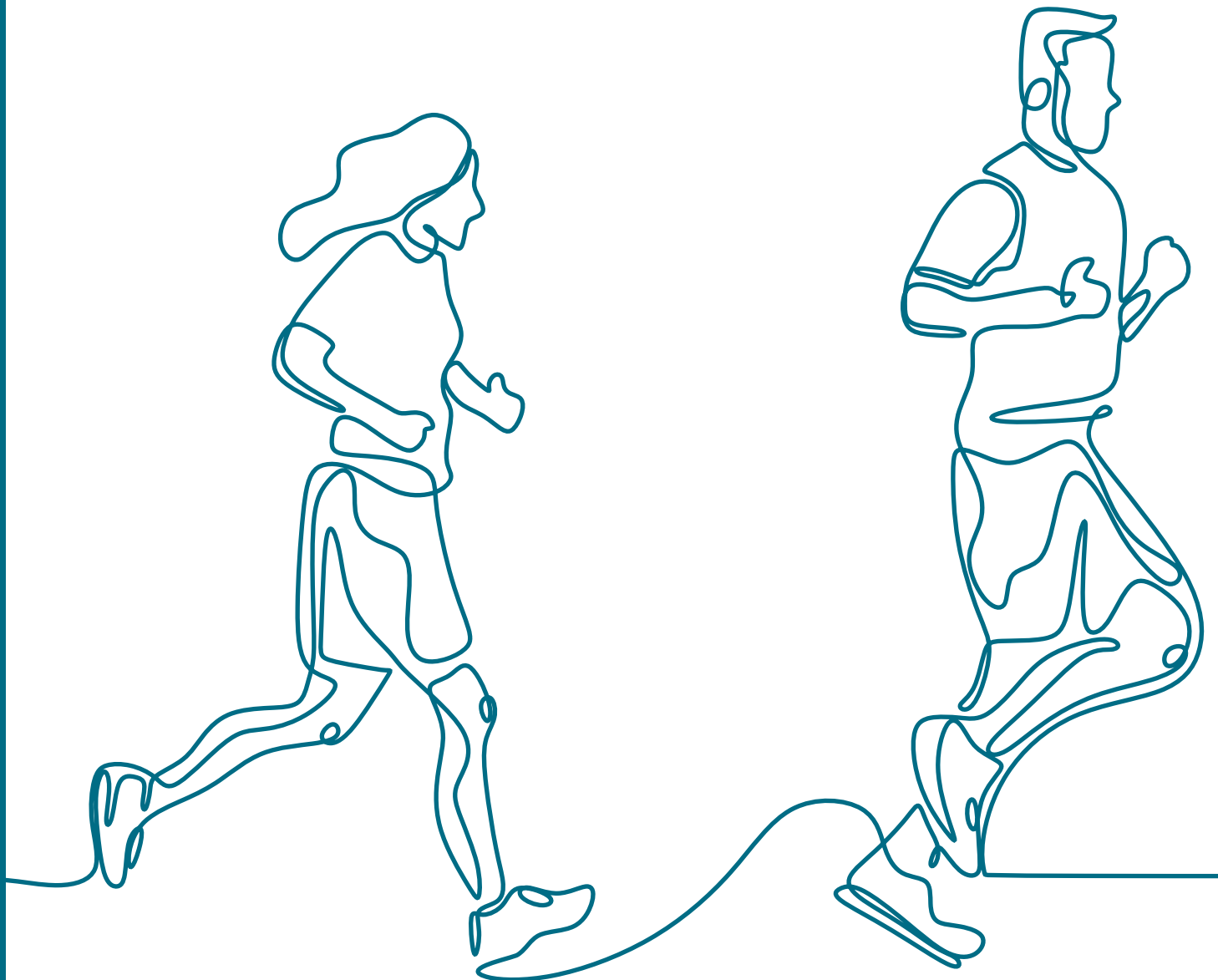
Above all our spaces will be flexible, reacting to the needs and wants of the community as it evolves



## PLACES THAT MAKE HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE WAYS OF LIVING THE NATURAL CHOICE

Enabling walking, and more broadly sustainable ways of travelling, both within our developments and via connections to local networks and existing communities is essential. Non-car-based travel should be a viable and, ideally preferable, option for a large proportion of people's day-to-day movements. This has the triple benefit of creating healthier lifestyles, having a positive environmental impact and resulting in a more sociable public realm.

Furthermore, we want to enable movement in day-to-day life by delivering diverse and cohesive active environments. Not through signs or artificial products dotted around our parks but by making the natural landscape and essential infrastructure (from benches to banks and steps) work hard to create exciting and interesting opportunities to be active, not because people have to, but because they want to.



## PLACES THAT HAVE ENGAGED AND PROUD COMMUNITIES

The community is at the centre of our thinking, for both existing residents and those of the future. It is about understanding what we need to deliver and how we operate to enhance day-to-day life.

This includes how we engage, how we understand communities' needs and how we work alongside them to build long-lasting relationships. Equally important, it's about what we need to deliver in terms of the public realm and how we design to facilitate the natural formation of community from the start.

We look to support local businesses and local causes, and to contribute positively to the communities we work with.



## **PLACES THAT ARE INCLUSIVE FOR ALL GENERATIONS AND DEMOGRAPHICS**

We want to deliver for everyone. That's why we aim to keep in mind the needs of all future residents and visitors and incorporate them in all aspects of what we do, from amenity provision to day-to-day movement and to the use of public space.

At the end of the day we want everyone to be healthy and happy, not just one core demographic.



## PLACES THAT PROTECT, PRESERVE AND ENHANCE NATURE

Easy access to diverse and plentiful nature is a proven factor in improving health and happiness and is an essential ingredient in the places we will deliver.

We are acutely aware of the environmental impact that the delivery of new places has, and the responsibility that comes with it. We seek to do all we can to minimise our footprint and to look for enhancement opportunities:

- **Actively promoting** and delivering workable and useful sustainable transport solutions
- **Following the Building with Nature** framework
- **Building in biodiversity** throughout our sites, and seeking to deliver beyond policy requirements
- **Considering long-term** climate resilience solutions from early design stages
- **Enforcing minimum standards** on housebuilders
- **Supporting low carbon** developers
- **Working with environmentally** conscious suppliers as a key part of our tender process, and working with them to minimise their impact
- **Understanding the impact** that we have, so we can measure and improve our performance
- **Ensuring that the environmental** impact of design and delivery solutions is a key factor in decision making



# OUR DESIGN AND PLACEMAKING FRAMEWORK

## SUMMARY OF PRINCIPLES

\*Refer to page 8 for more information.



### STRATEGY AND VISION

- Get under the skin of the local area
- Work with place focused consultants
- Create an early vision for the site



### ENGAGEMENT

- Open, wide and deep engagement - not just consultation
- Maintain engagement and collaboration, and build relationships through all stages of design, delivery and occupation



### DESIGN

- Embed/mesh the site with the surrounding area
- Ensure appropriate amenities on site or within a 15 minute walk
- Provide a clear and appropriate middle
- Deliver gentle density
- Include appropriate block structures with clear fronts and backs
- Identify a hierarchy of routes to give priority to cyclists and pedestrians
- Ensure public spaces are sufficiently enclosed
- Carefully consider building height-to-street ratios
- Provide green space little and often
- Design with climate resilience at the forefront
- Seek to deliver 'streets for all', through material choices, crossings, prioritisation, natural speed reduction by design
- Ensure open spaces are multifunctional, are for a wide demographic, and for year-round activity
- Ensure key walking routes are safe, accessible, interesting and provide resting spaces
- Design with car clubs and EV charging locations in mind
- Consider early how to maximise biodiversity net-gain and how to achieve in excess of policy.
- Consider a variety of car parking options to minimise the impact of cars on the public realm



## DELIVERY, MANAGEMENT AND CURATION

- Include contractual design codes on all land parcel sales
- Ensure housing delivery is monitored from a design point of view, with appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure compliance
- Work with delivery partners who share our ethos, in terms of quality, design and sustainability
- Foster community 'ownership' early on in delivery
- Measure and understand the impact of our work
- Understand and appraise the long-term management options from the start

## CONTACT US



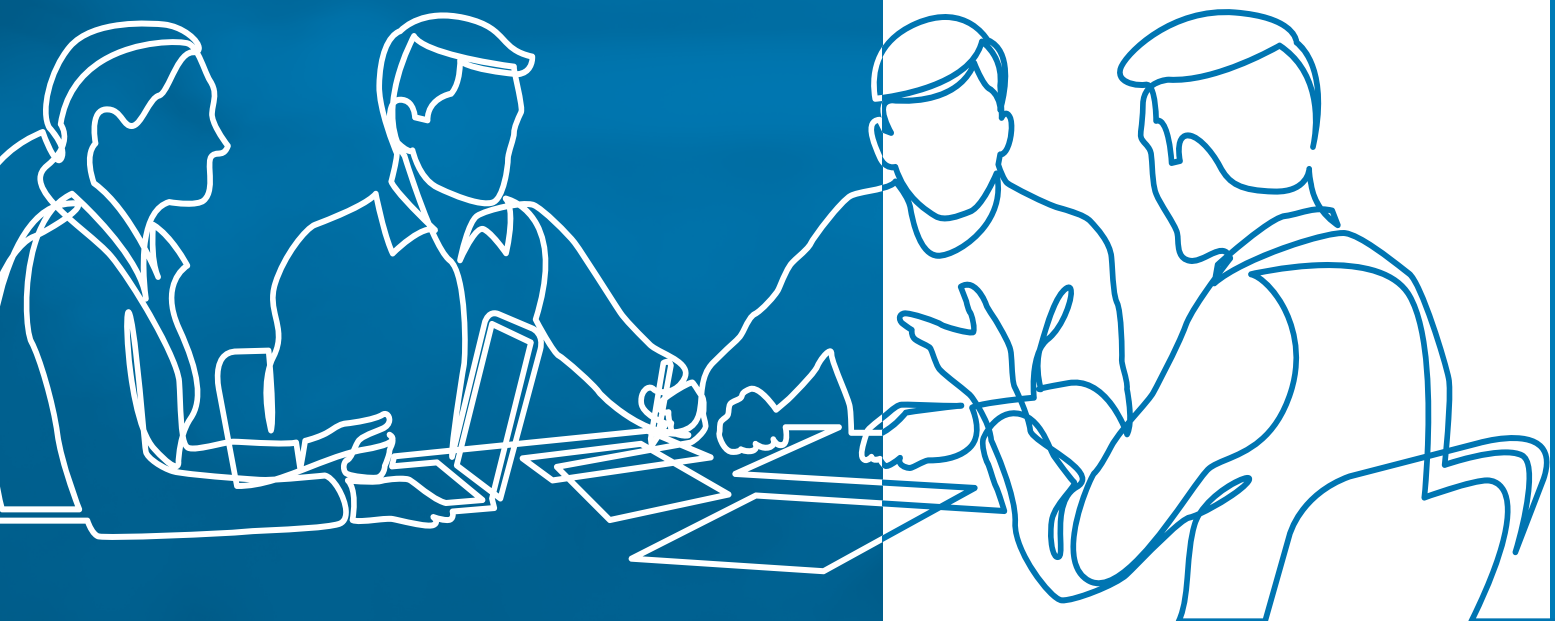
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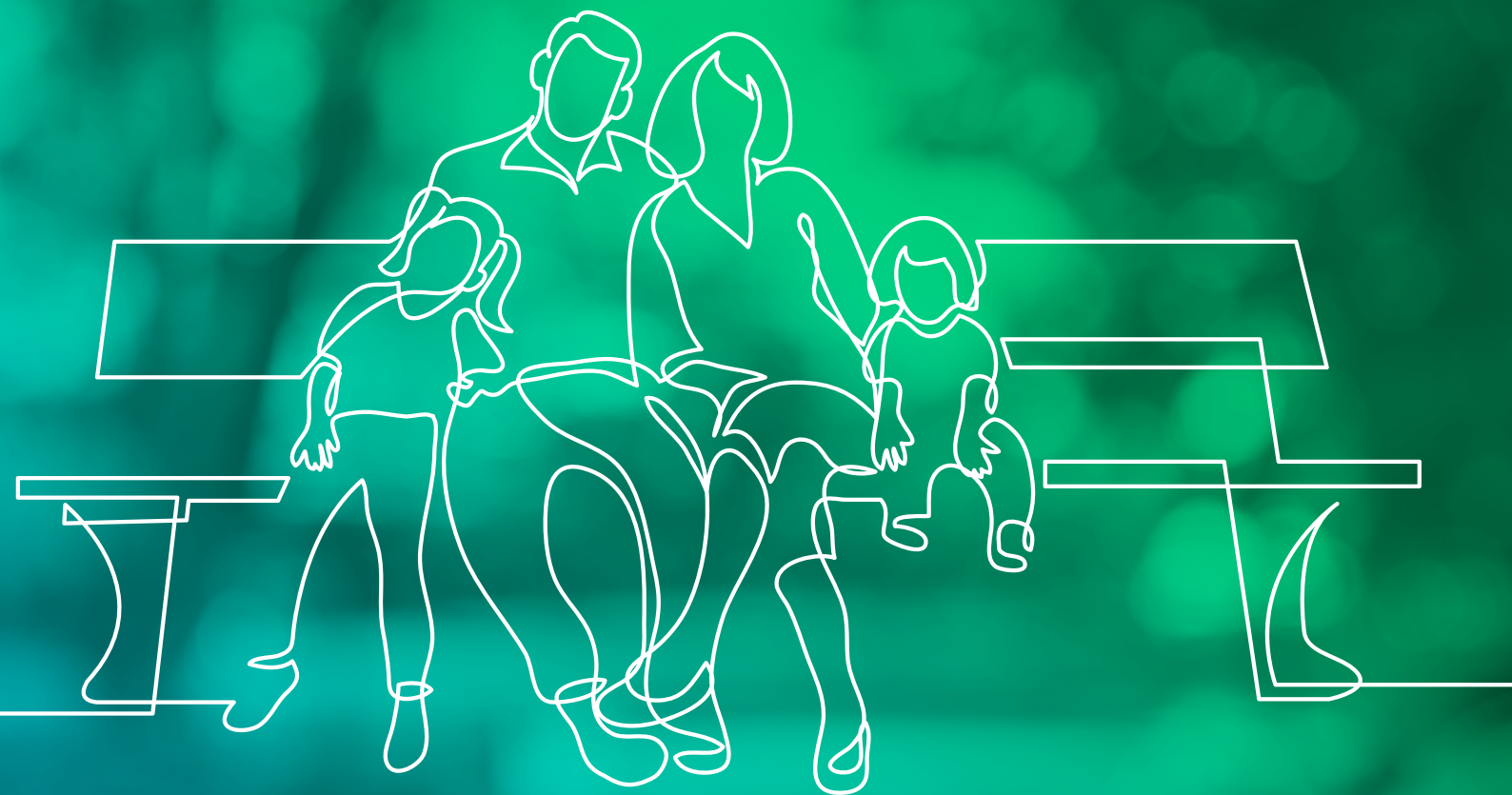
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Lands Improvement is a leading UK strategic land development company and master developer. We acquire greenfield and brownfield land, priming the land for residential-led development by obtaining outline planning and delivering strategic infrastructure. Our portfolio of landholdings consists of c.3,500 acres of land, with over 20 projects at stages from planning promotion to land sales. The history of Lands Improvement can be traced back to 1853; the company being founded to provide capital assistance to farmers. Today, Lands Improvement continues to work with farmers and a wide range of landowners to assess development potential of sites and add value through planning and infrastructure delivery. Lands Improvement is part of the Telereal Trillium Group.