MEDIA BRAND OF THE YEAR
IBP AWARDS

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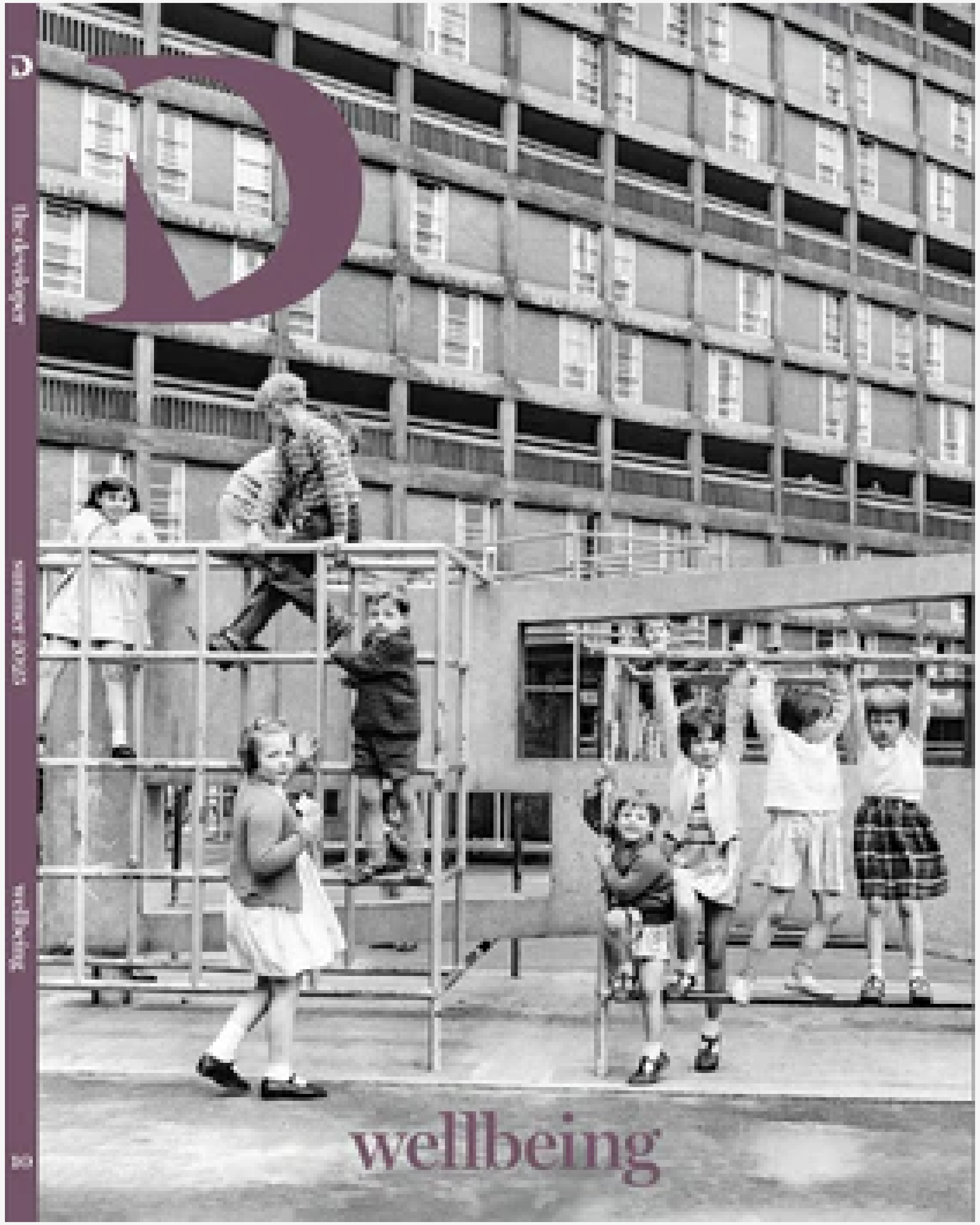

COVER OF THE WELLBEING
ISSUE, SUMMER 2025

COVER OF THE SEASIDE ISSUE, WINTER 2024

Journalism and photojournalism on place in print, podcast, online and in-person, holding the industry to account for the profound impact of the built environment on people

This year, on our website and in the biannual magazine, our coverage has focused on the personal impacts of urban regeneration and climate risk. We publish what we call 'horizon journalism', taking a longer view than a typical news organisation because our readers are working on long-term projects with generational impacts. When you're a developer working on a project that completes in 20 years time, climate risk, housing affordability and child wellbeing come into view.

View the digital editions:
https://issuu.com/thedeveloperuk/docs/the_developer_2025_reduced
https://issuu.com/thedeveloperuk/docs/the_developer_wellbeing

Climate risk

This year, we've covered climate risk in news features, during our Climate Resilience event and in opinion pieces with an emphasis on coastal erosion in Wales, East Yorkshire, Essex and along the Kent coast.

Displaced: Can we save UK coastal communities from the sea?
Harriet Saddington visits communities facing managed retreat, including Jaywick Sands in Essex, where the community, council and architect are facing up to the existential risk of sea level rise
https://www.thedeveloper.live/places/displaced-can-we-save-uk-coastal-communities-from-the-sea

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Sunspot, a new building for Jaywick Sands, is designed to be demountable in case the structure needs to be relocated at a later date. Photo: Jim Stephenson

Displaced: Can we save UK coastal communities from the sea?

23/01/25

If we know a community is under extreme risk, do we have a moral duty to defend or relocate it? *Harriet Saddington* on an advancing coastal frontline

Harriet Saddington

riet Saddington is an architect and writer, who ks with micro to large architecture practices developers, helping them to shape

Residents of the Welsh coastal village of Fairbourne were alarmed when they were labelled the UK's first "climate refugees". Gwynedd Council declared that their 450-home community was due to be decommissioned in 30 years' time and so they would be in managed retreat from 2025. "It was like they were talking to us as naughty children," one resident says.

Managed retreat – recently rebranded as "managed realignment" to sound less like running away – means no longer maintaining the flood defences in a particular area and, instead, restoring natural processes. In Fairbourne's case, this did not require the local council to offer compensation or assistance to the people being displaced. "In the long term, maintaining and increasing flood defences would not only be costly but would also lead to increased risk to life if the defences fail," the council stated.

Under managed retreat, home values plummet, insurance is impossible and residents have limited resources to fall back on or capacity to move. A 20 or even 30-year warning of decommission does not provide support for adaptation. Meanwhile, these communities are blighted by negative media exposure while putting up with experts who come in with a "plan" but without funding to enact it.

The three physical responses to climate change's impact on our coast are: defend, retreat or abandon. Do these same approaches apply to the management of the people who live there? If we know a community is under extreme risk, is it sustainable for them to remain there, and is it worth improving it in the meantime? Is there a duty of care to relocate them and, if so, who pays for it?

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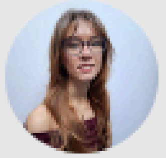
Flood protections have created place to play and dwell along the seafront and connected the public to historic sites

Not just a wall: "The flood defences are part of our city, not just infrastructure"

20/01/25

The Southsea coastal defence project is flood protection as destination. Not only does the 4.5km scheme protect Portsmouth from flood damage, it also enhances the city financially, culturally and socially, writes *Kimberley France*



Kimberley France

Publishing and Events Assistant,
The Developer and Festival of Place

The Southsea Coastal Scheme is the UK's largest local-authority-led sea defence scheme, covering 4.5km around Portsmouth, protecting people and businesses, and delivering new public space. Chris Koster, the scheme's programme manager, highlights it as "one of the biggest community schemes I've ever worked on."

Construction of the project started in 2020, 10 years after the initial strategy plan was approved with the aim of protecting the city from a potential £1 billion in damage from 4m-high flood depths. With a 1-in-200-year flood standard, the £180 million scheme, set to complete in 2029, aims to save 10,000 properties, 704 commercial properties, three monuments, 74 listed structures and four critical access routes.

"The benefits of the way the project is delivered add up to more than the sum of the project, the outcomes are so much greater," says Koster. "We've curated a delivery model and team to develop a world-class seafront, that has yielded a positive working environment and outcome."

> "Previously the promenade wasn't a destination," says Koster. "It had no identity to it, no access or 'place' to visit"

Not just a wall: "The flood defences are part of our city, not just infrastructure"

Newcomer journalist Kimberley France writes about Southsea's approach to coastal defence, which has managed to create a seafront walkway with play and social spaces while protecting homes and historic sites from erosion

https://www.thedeveloper.live/places/southsea-coastal-defence-flood-protection-as-destination

Erosion in Yorkshire: "You can't defend everywhere"

Angus Young reported on tough decisions being made to surrender properties and places to the sea in East Yorkshire, where accelerating coastal erosion will see the loss of property with no compensation and no attempt to shore up the defences. https://www.thedeveloper.live/places/erosion-in-yorkshire-you-cant-defend-everywhere

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Erosion in Yorkshire is threatening the coastline: Photo by Craig Marriott

Erosion in Yorkshire: "You can't defend everywhere"

08/01/25

Flood and coastal risk management investment is not seen as economically viable or desirable along the East Yorkshire coast, reports Angus Young who uncovers the tough decisions being taken

Angus Young

In 1847, a new pub called the Blue Bell was built in Kilnsea close to where the East Yorkshire coast meets the Humber estuary. A plaque set on to a cobble wall at the pub recorded that it was 534 yards (488 metres) from the sea.

The measurement was a reminder of the grim fate of a previous pub with the same name, which had been washed away some years before along with most of the old village, including its medieval church. Bodies buried in the church graveyard were exposed as the soft clay cliff it stood on crumbed into the sea.

Today the Blue Bell – now owned by the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust – is only 55 yards (50 metres) from the sea.

Coastal erosion in this part of the world is nothing new but it is accelerating. A recent survey by East Riding of Yorkshire Council recorded some of the largest losses of land ever seen since regular clifftop monitoring started in 1983.

In one stretch of coastline where the annual average loss is 1.4 metres, up to 12 metres of land were lost between August 2023 and May this year. Elsewhere, between 6 and 9 metres of cliff crumbled away during the same period.

> "Defending the whole of our coast doesn't stack up because the reality is that if we did, you end up with Lincolnshire under water"

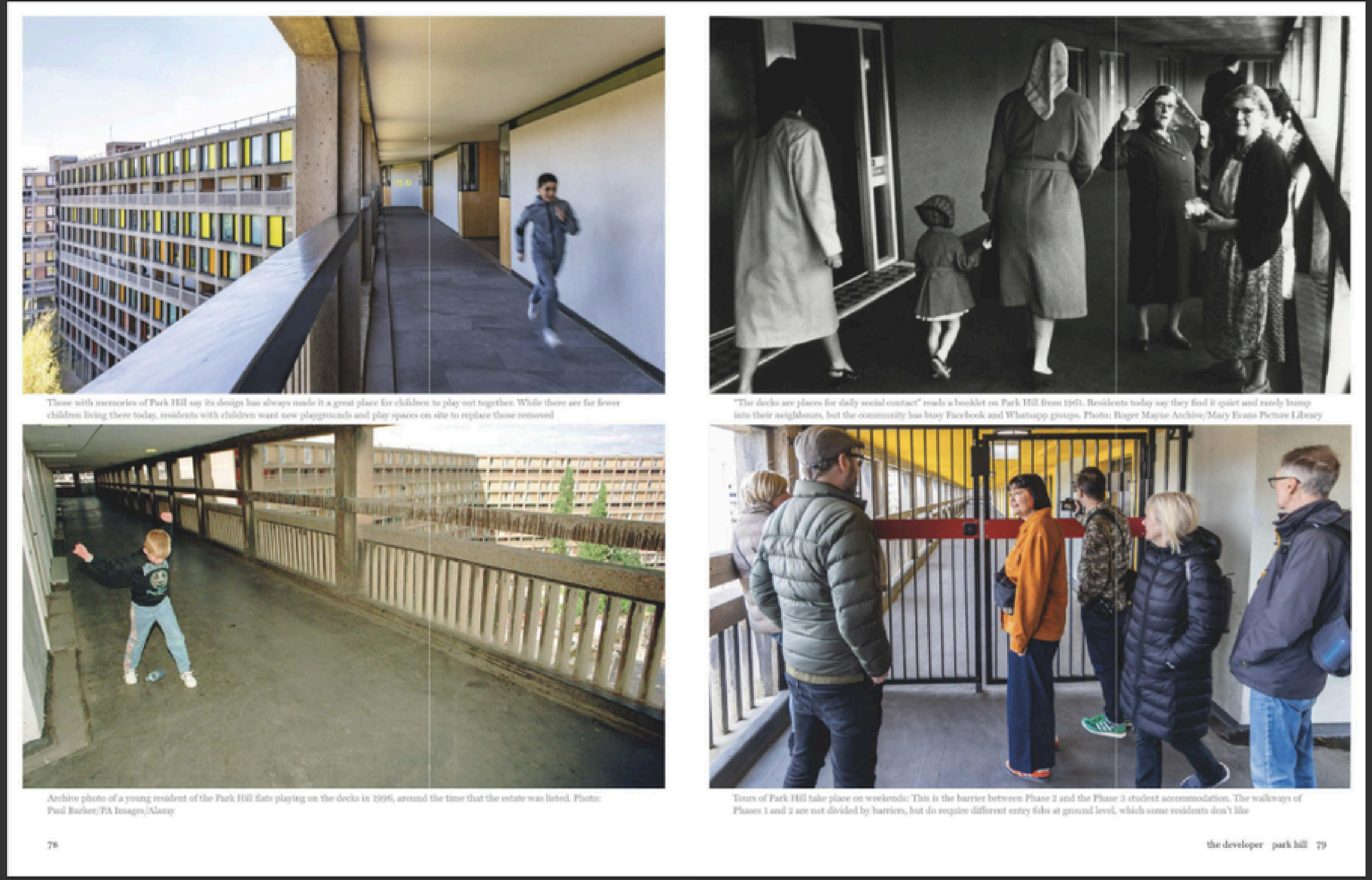
Placetests

Our Placetests are part anthropology, part journalism, based on open-ended interviews conducted on site and photojournalism featuring street photography of a place in-use. This year we covered two very different places - the seaside town of Folkestone and the Park Hill estate in Sheffield.

Placetest: Park Hill

Anthropologist Dr Muriel Lamarque and writer Laura Mark spoke to the local residents at Park Hill in Sheffield about their experience of living in the place, uncovering some exclusive findings – shared frustration at living in a tourist attraction, the lack of a playground and complex feelings about the site's history. The piece elicited a response from developers Urban Splash who said they were looking into adding a playground to future phases. The coverage combined new and archive photojournalism

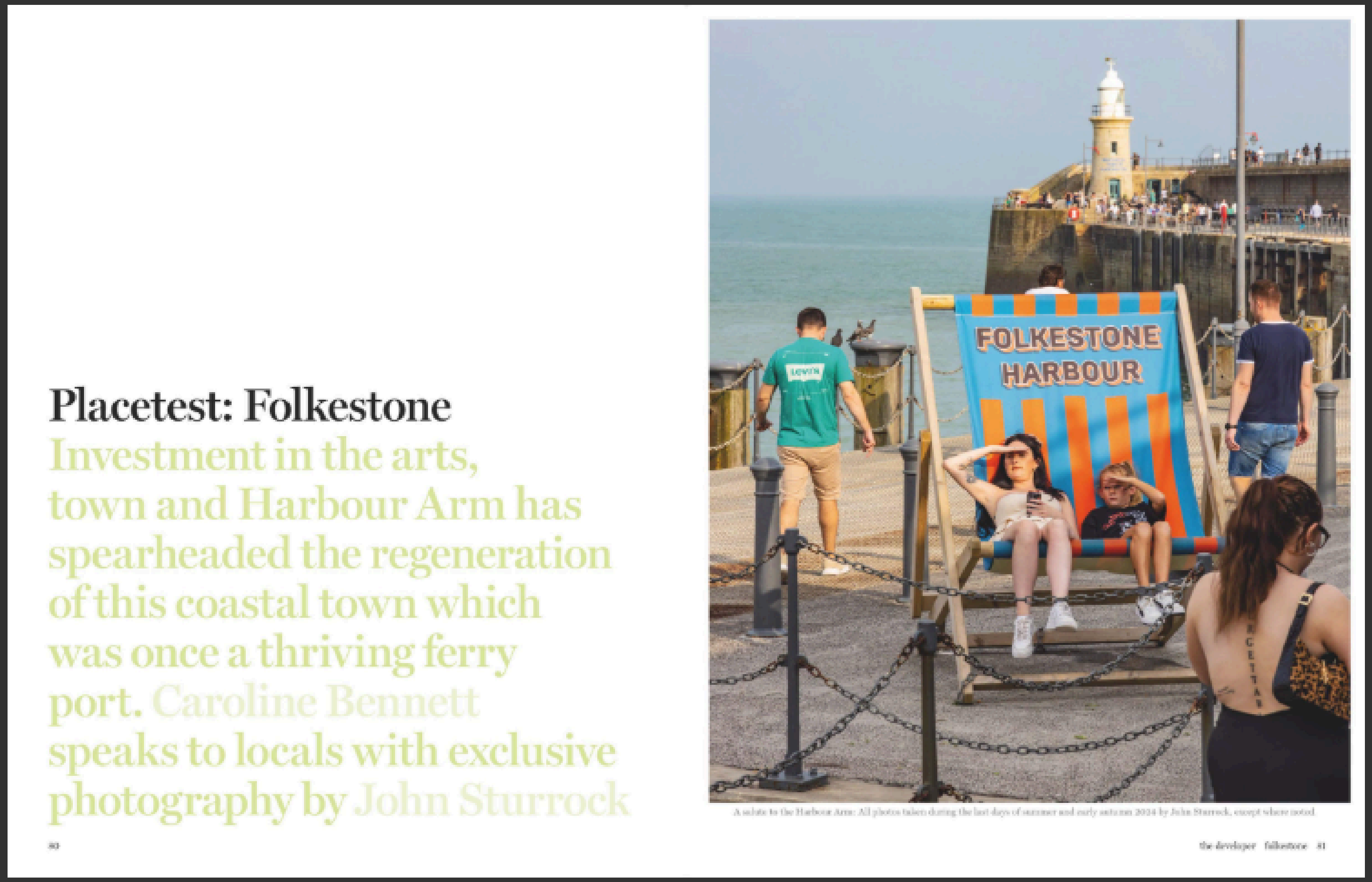
https://issuu.com/thedeveloperuk/docs/the_developer_wellbeing



Placetest: Folkestone

Anthropologist Caroline Bennett visits Folkestone and interviews locals about the many changes to the town over the past decade of arts-led regeneration. What she finds is a vibrant creative community and a warm and welcoming town. She also finds concerns about a social stratification emerging in the town – where new restaurants, cafes and housing along the seafront costs significantly more than what locals can afford. At the same time, community facilities are shutting down due to a lack of funding. Some locals share that their rent has increased by over 15 per cent, saying "the rents aren't affordable any more."

https://issuu.com/thedeveloperuk/docs/the_developer_2025_reduced


Placetest: Folkestone
Investment in the arts, town and Harbour Arm has spearheaded the regeneration of this coastal town which was once a thriving ferry port. Caroline Bennett speaks to locals with exclusive photography by John Sturrock

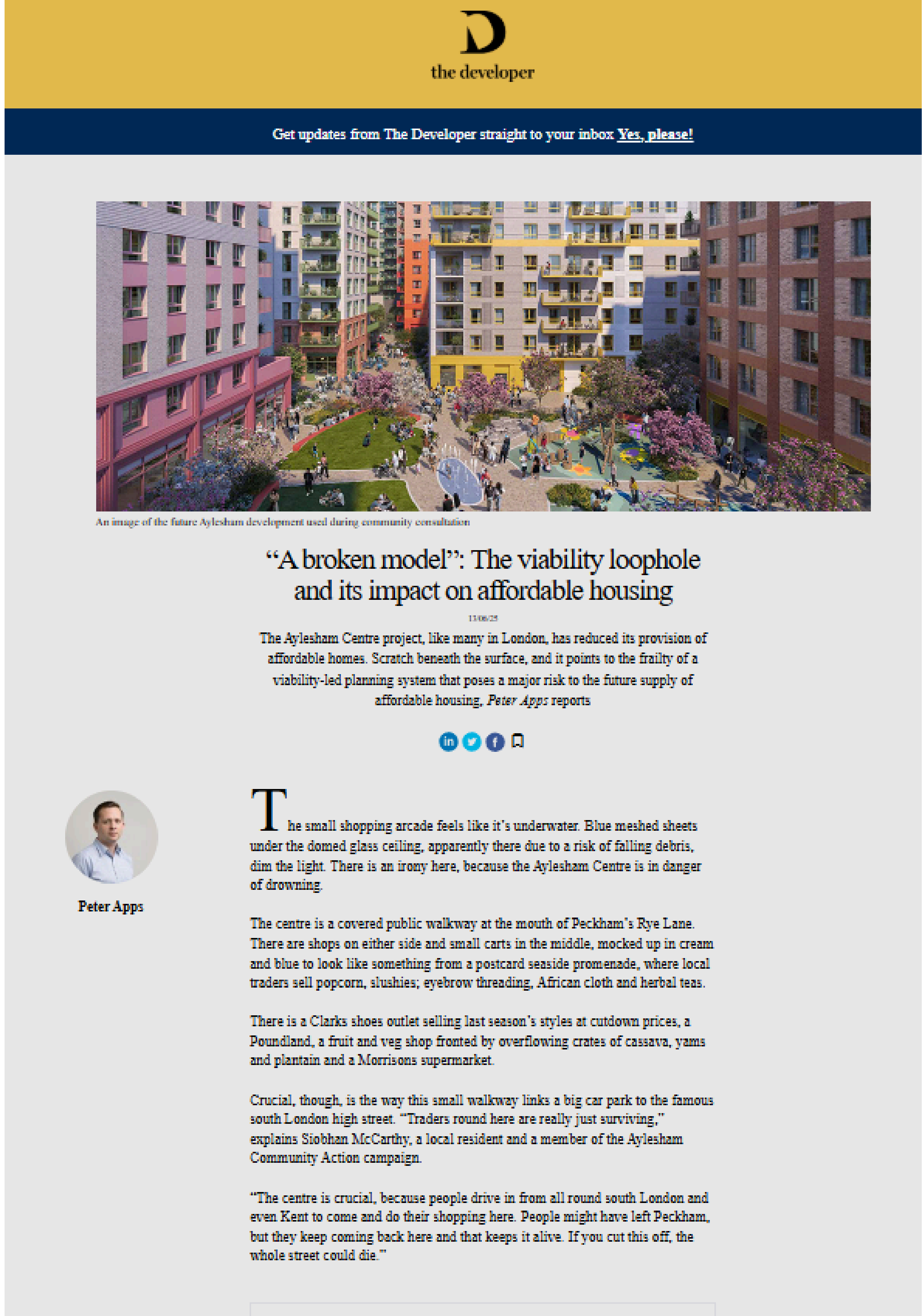
Housing

The vital subject of housing was covered from several unique angles in long-form articles that explored policy with both deliberate and unexpected consequences.

"A broken model": The viability loophole and its impact on affordable housing

Award-winning journalist Peter Apps' reporting on the viability loophole looked into how developers reduce the provision of affordable homes after planning on the basis of viability, showing the need for reform to the planning system. After its publication, a senior civil servant described it as "the clearest, most comprehensive look and the best thing I've ever read on the problem."

https://www.thedeveloper.live/opinion/a-broken-model-the-viability-loophole-and-its-impact-on-affordable-housing



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An image of the future Aylesham development used during community consultation

"A broken model": The viability loophole and its impact on affordable housing

13/06/25

The Aylesham Centre project, like many in London, has reduced its provision of affordable homes. Scratch beneath the surface, and it points to the frailty of a viability-led planning system that poses a major risk to the future supply of affordable housing, *Peter Apps* reports

Peter Apps

The small shopping arcade feels like it's underwater. Blue meshed sheets under the domed glass ceiling, apparently there due to a risk of falling debris, dim the light. There is an irony here, because the Aylesham Centre is in danger of drowning.

The centre is a covered public walkway at the mouth of Peckham's Rye Lane. There are shops on either side and small carts in the middle, mocked up in cream and blue to look like something from a postcard seaside promenade, where local traders sell popcorn, slushies; eyebrow threading, African cloth and herbal teas.

There is a Clarks shoes outlet selling last season's styles at cutdown prices, a Poundland, a fruit and veg shop fronted by overflowing crates of cassava, yams and plantain and a Morrisons supermarket.

Crucial, though, is the way this small walkway links a big car park to the famous south London high street. "Traders round here are really just surviving," explains Siobhan McCarthy, a local resident and a member of the Aylesham Community Action campaign.

"The centre is crucial, because people drive in from all round south London and even Kent to come and do their shopping here. People might have left Peckham, but they keep coming back here and that keeps it alive. If you cut this off, the whole street could die."

Is the new anti-gentrification legislation in Louisville a model for global cities?

Apps covered new anti-gentrification legislation in Louisville, Kentucky and explored whether the policy was a potential model for the UK to follow, interviewing experts and academics on how it will enshrine affordable housing in places undergoing rapid revitalisation, preventing displacement.

https://www.thedeveloper.live/opinion/is-the-new-anti-gentrification-legislation-in-louisville-a-model-for-global-cities

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Louisville, Kentucky has passed a new law that will assess developments against their potential for creating displacement

Is the new anti-gentrification legislation in Louisville a model for global cities?

10/12/24

Peter Apps looks to the city of Bourbon, Muhammad Ali and the Kentucky Derby to learn about a groundbreaking piece of city policy to fight gentrification and displacement

Peter Apps

The housing crisis is often framed as a straightforward shortage of housing of any type, meaning any new supply is seen as good. But in Louisville, Kentucky as in many other places, the picture is really more nuanced. Every type of development does not benefit every type of resident.

You can find evidence of this in city's official Housing Needs Assessment, which is produced every five years and serves as a "bible" for new housing plans. It shows the city has a deficit of 36,000 homes for citizens earning 30% of the area median income and 14,000 for those earning 50%. But for those on higher wages there is no shortage of supply. In fact, there is a surplus of 21,000 homes for those earning 150% of the area median income. So what the city needs is not just more housing, but more *affordable* housing.

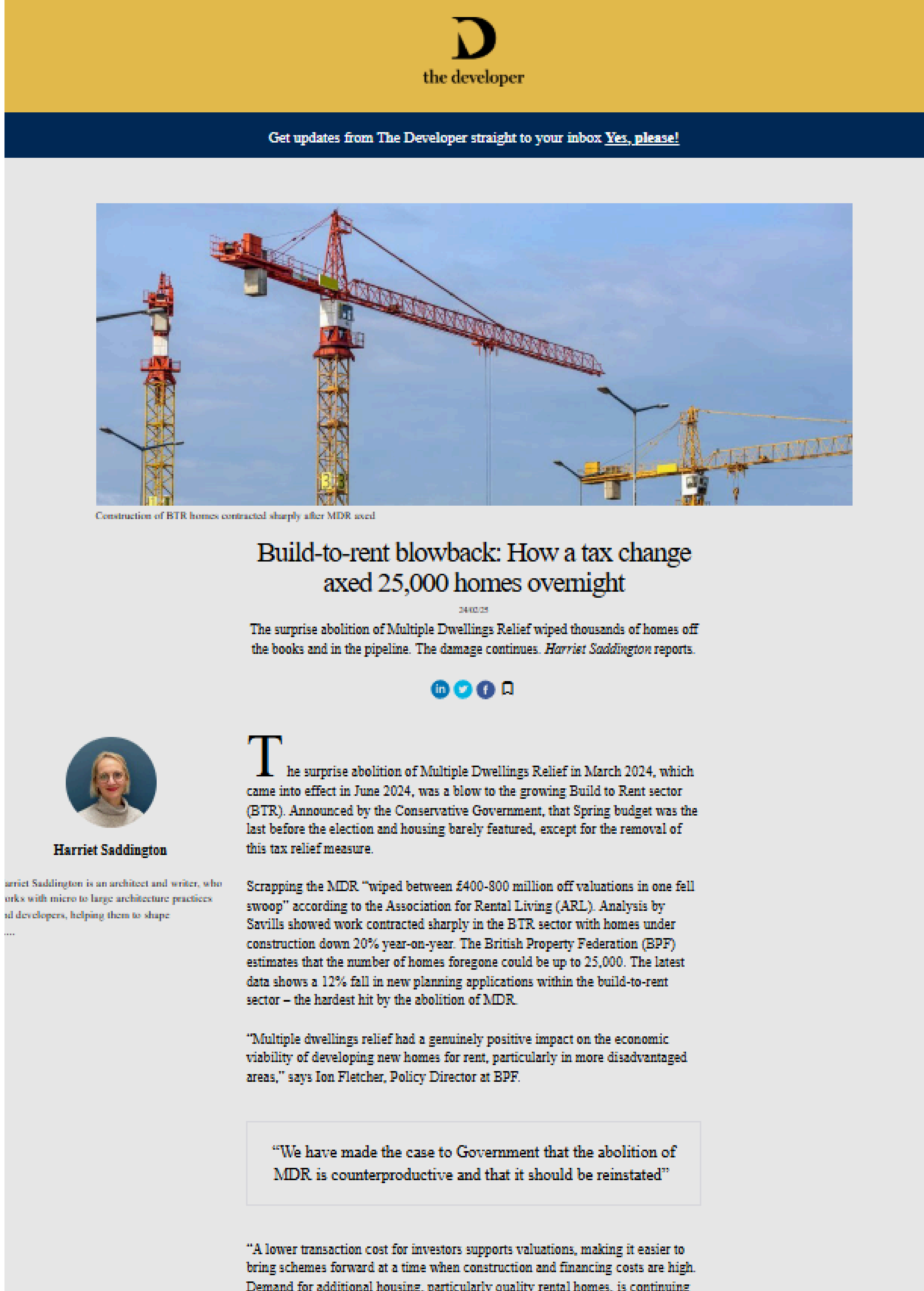
This means lower income residents are increasingly struggling to afford to live in their historic communities in the city, an issue which impacts black communities disproportionately. In 2010, the famous district of Smoketown, which was one of the few places where black communities were allowed to live after the Civil War, was 79.8% black and 16% white. But by 2020, the black community had shrunk to 65.5% while the proportion of white residents had grown to 27.4%.

"The urgency to prioritise anti-displacement initiatives in these areas cannot be overstated," said the city's Housing Needs Assessment in 2019. But there was little action from the city council. Frustrated, independent councilman Jecorey Arthur, who represents one of these districts, along with a large network of

Build-to-rent blowback: How a tax change axed 25,000 homes overnight

Harriet Saddington reported on how a tax change axed 25,000 homes overnight and the continued fallout of the surprise abolition of Multiple Dwellings Relief, which came into effect in June 2024, resulting in a 12% fall in new planning applications within the build-to-rent sector.

https://www.thedeveloper.live/opinion/opinion/build-to-rent-blowback-how-a-tax-change-axed-25000-homes-overnight



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Construction of BTR homes contracted sharply after MDR axed

Build-to-rent blowback: How a tax change axed 25,000 homes overnight

24/02/25

The surprise abolition of Multiple Dwellings Relief wiped thousands of homes off the books and in the pipeline. The damage continues. *Harriet Saddington* reports.

Harriet Saddington

...arriet Saddington is an architect and writer, who ...orks with micro to large architecture practices ...d developers, helping them to shape ....

The surprise abolition of Multiple Dwellings Relief in March 2024, which came into effect in June 2024, was a blow to the growing Build to Rent sector (BTR). Announced by the Conservative Government, that Spring budget was the last before the election and housing barely featured, except for the removal of this tax relief measure.

Scrapping the MDR "wiped between £400-800 million off valuations in one fell swoop" according to the Association for Rental Living (ARL). Analysis by Savills showed work contracted sharply in the BTR sector with homes under construction down 20% year-on-year. The British Property Federation (BPF) estimates that the number of homes foregone could be up to 25,000. The latest data shows a 12% fall in new planning applications within the build-to-rent sector – the hardest hit by the abolition of MDR.

"Multiple dwellings relief had a genuinely positive impact on the economic viability of developing new homes for rent, particularly in more disadvantaged areas," says Ion Fletcher, Policy Director at BPF.

> "We have made the case to Government that the abolition of MDR is counterproductive and that it should be reinstated"

"A lower transaction cost for investors supports valuations, making it easier to bring schemes forward at a time when construction and financing costs are high. Demand for additional housing, particularly quality rental homes, is continuing

Thank you.