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# Evaluating New Town Heritage in Peterborough

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## **Presentation contents**

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## Peterborough: Brief history

**1118** Peterborough Abbey

**1330** Longthorpe Tower

**1541** Peterborough becomes a city  
(population 1500)

**1850** Great Northern Railway London to York  
line opened

**1967** Peterborough Development  
Corporation. Prior population 80,000, post  
160,000.



## **The Peterborough Effect – November 16 2017**

**Expanding Peterborough under the New Towns Act;**  
Graham Walker, Architect, formerly of Peterborough  
Development Corporation

**Peterborough in 2017 – Where we are now;** Simon  
Machen, Corporate Director Growth and Regeneration,  
Peterborough City Council

**Heritage and Culture in Peterborough New Town;**  
Richard Hunt, Head of Culture, Vivacity and Ivan Cutting,  
Eastern Angles Theatre Company

## Expanding Peterborough under the New Towns Act

26,000 new homes

25,000 new jobs

26 miles of new parkway

2,500 acres of green space  
(Nene Park)

Queensgate shopping centre



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## Peterborough today:

Out of 62 cities, Peterborough is\*:-

- 1st for annual housing stock growth (1.7%)
- 4th fastest growing city by population (1.8% annual growth)
- 10th highest for housing price growth (8.1% annual growth)
- Fastest commute time by car of any UK city

\*Statistics from November 2017



## **Peterborough today continued: Challenges**

28% population increase 2013 to 2031

Housing register – 3,300 and increasing

Skills - Business demand for higher level qualifications, lower than the national average for professional and technical skills

Peterborough has one of the lowest Council Tax levels in the country

Need to save a further £38m over the next 3 years

## Heritage and Culture in Peterborough New Town

### 40 Years On project

Catalogue the records of the Peterborough Development Corporation

Run an oral history project across three stages

Produce a theatre production for touring round the city and beyond.

### Statistics

400 boxes of material

114 volunteers (9276 hours)

128 oral history interviews

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## Parkway Dreams

## Value of New Town Heritage in Peterborough

### Examples of value

- Success of Forty Years On
- Peterborough Civic Society
- Strong appreciation for reminiscence of the 1960s onwards- Archives talks
- Appreciation of successful elements of PDC work: Nene Park, parkways, Queensgate
- Rhubarb Bridge
- “Subconscious appreciation”
- Desire by some for Queensgate to be listed

## Value of New Town Heritage in Peterborough

### Examples of lack of value

- Peterborough doesn't identify as a New Town
- No 50 year celebration
- Civic Society haven't put forward much interest towards specific PDC protection
- Demolition of buildings – Bretton Wood School
- Council not following PDC ideals: Hampton, Queensgate refurbishment

## Google images: “Peterborough”



## Value of New Town Heritage in Peterborough

### Reasons for devaluing of New Town Heritage

- Lack of support from important advocates e.g. Local History Society
- PDC left a lot of responsibility to PCC: financially difficult
- Changes in City planning
- Lack of civic pride in PDC areas
- Generational divide

## Advantages of increased New Town Heritage understanding

Public educated in New Town Heritage can lobby against threats

Increase in Civic Pride

Improve community: Peterborough currently a fractured city post-Brexit (72.4% turnout, 61% leave)

Protect New Town Heritage