

# GARDENIA

Letchworth Gardens Quarter

**RE-IMAGINING THE GARDEN CITY**

Rob Delius

**HEALTHY  
CITY DESIGN  
INTERNATIONAL**

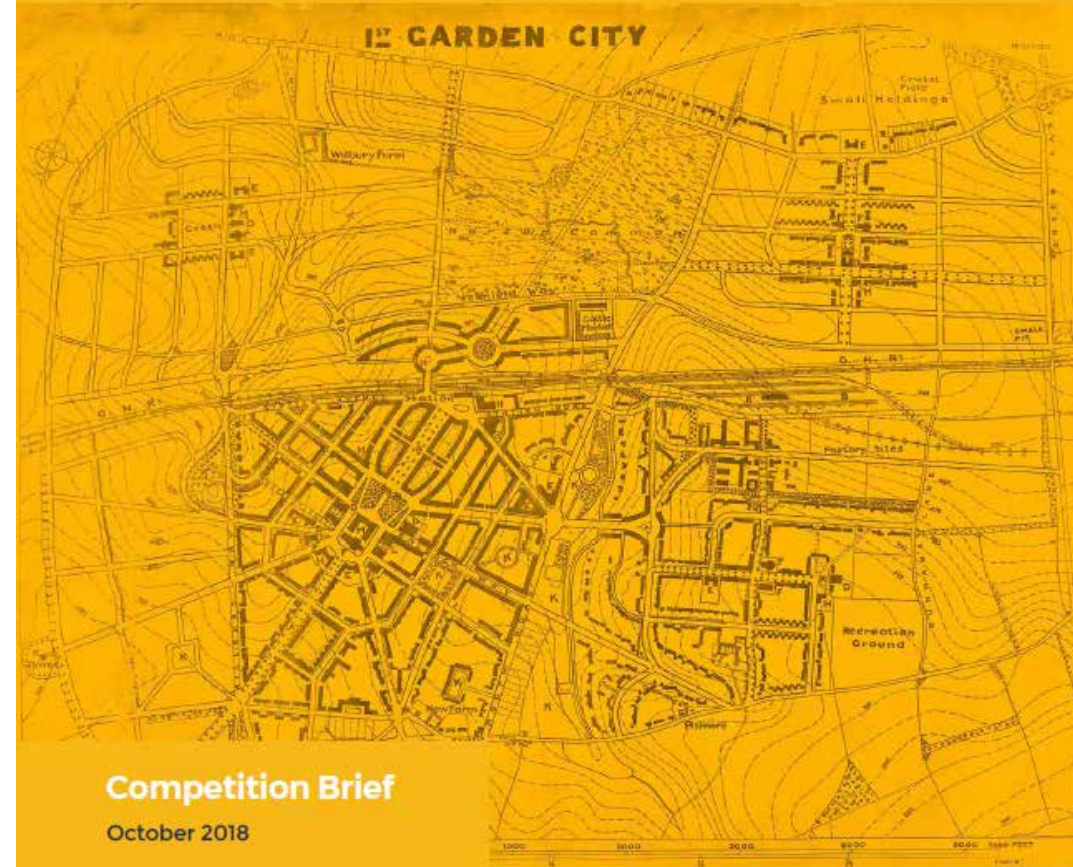
**STRIDE TREGLOWN**

# Garden at the centre of the town



# Re-Imagining the Garden City

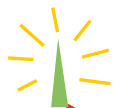
Design Ideas Competition



Competition Brief

October 2018

Connecting to / extending the axis



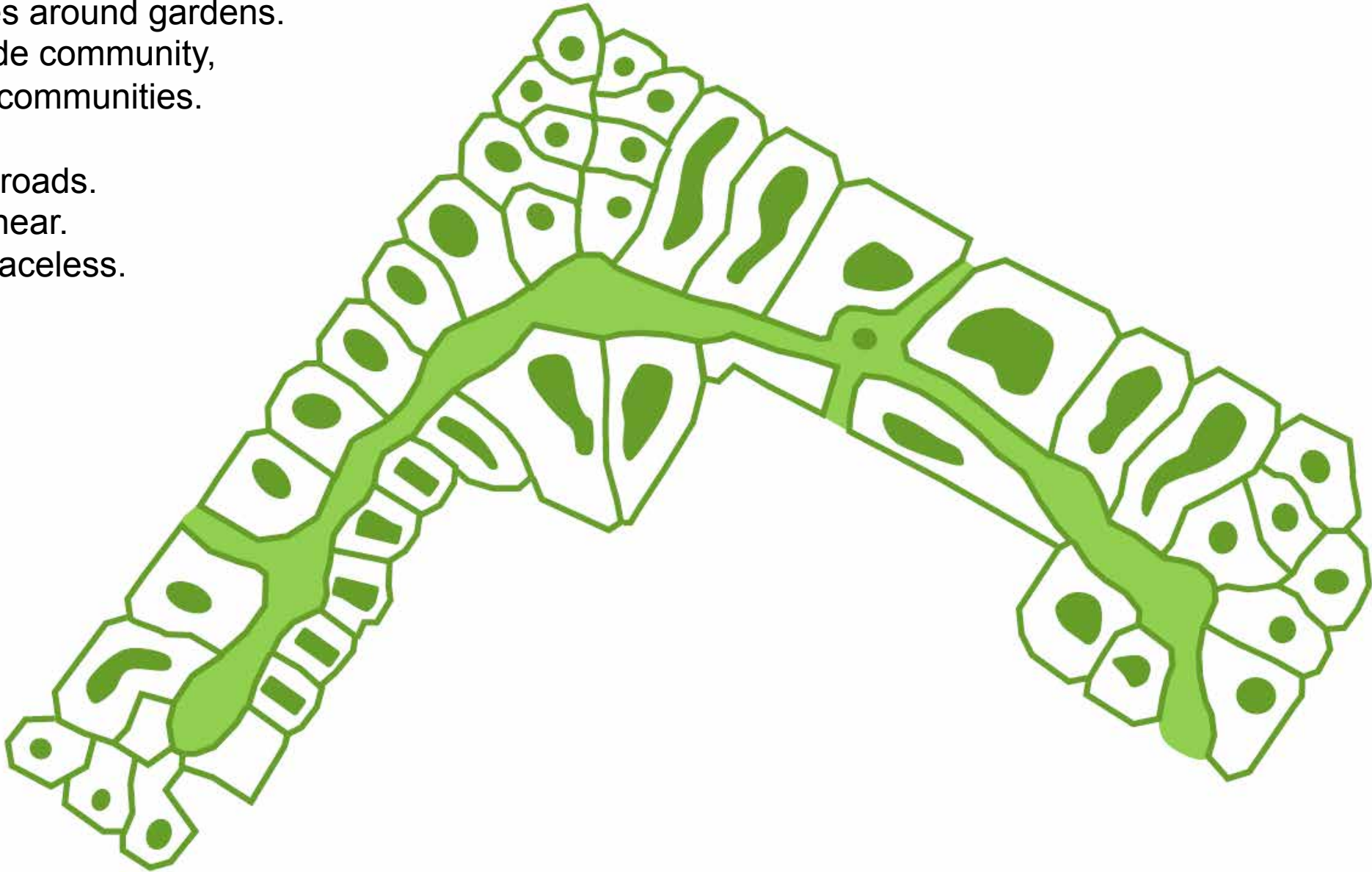
Heart of the masterplan,  
a garden.





Communities around gardens.  
One site-wide community,  
others mini communities.

Spaces not roads.  
Nodal not linear.  
Place not placeless.





Eastholm Green

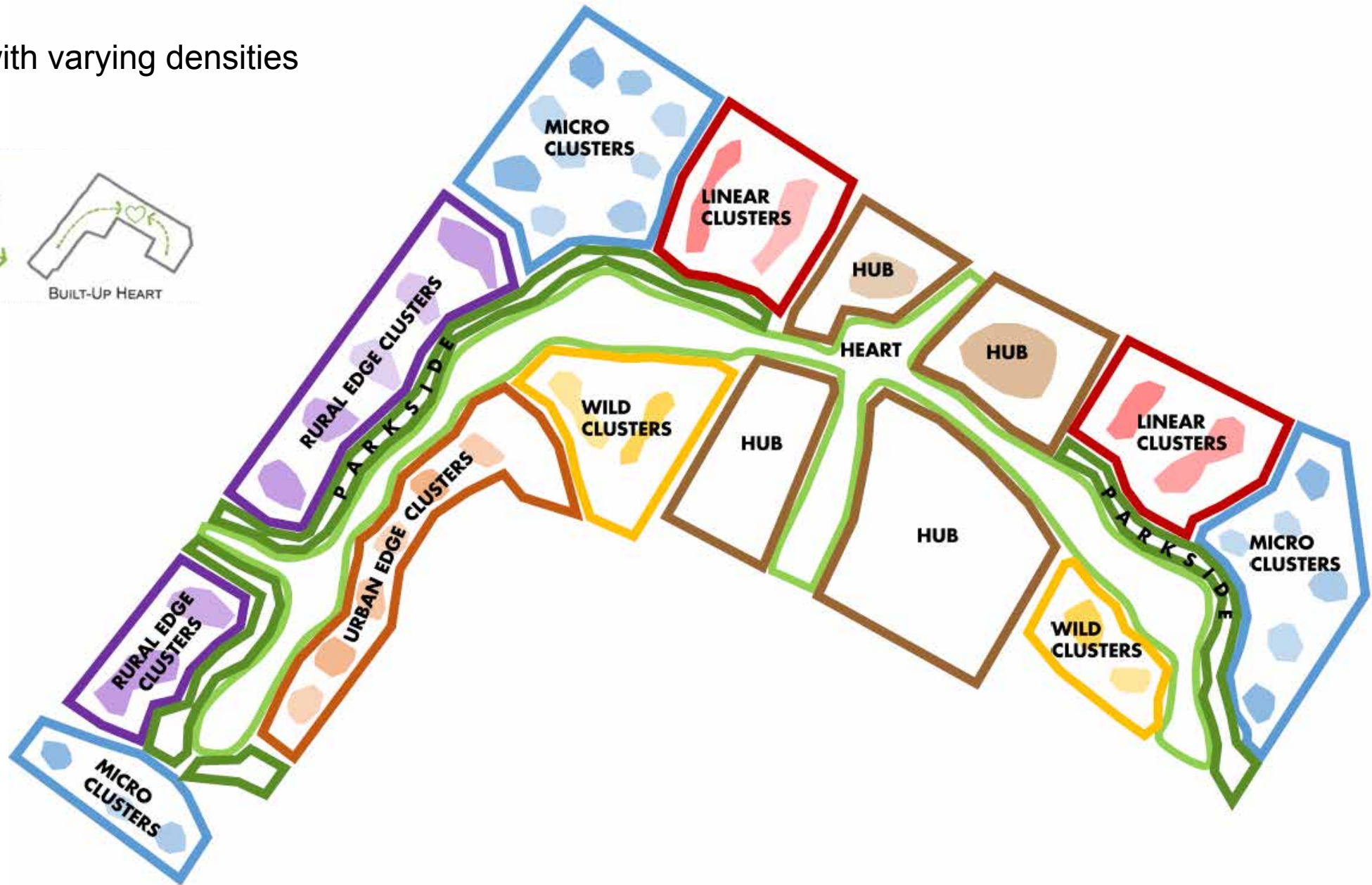
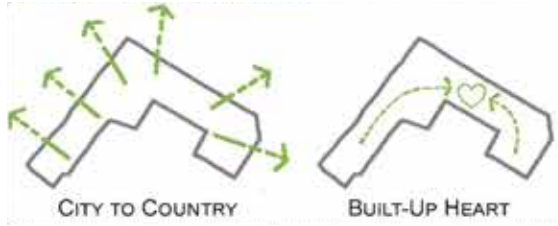
Spaces for community, ecology, food growing, SUDs...



Great Bow Yard and Baltic Wharf



# Clusters, with varying densities



# GARDENIA

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## The city is unfurling a new branch into the countryside - Gardenia.

The inspiration behind this new place is a connection with nature and Letchworth's founding vision of a city of gardens.

And like a branch its spine is its lifeblood - in this case brought to life by walkers, joggers, cyclists, electric buses and other sustainable vehicles traveling along a linear garden - going to work, going home, going to the community hub, going to school or simply going for a walk. It's also where food is grown. Literally a feeder route.

Peeling away from this are the 'leaves' - clusters of homes grouped around a small green space, their roofs designed to either harvest food or harvest light, like photosynthesis.

At the community heart of this new place is a tall vertical garden, on the city's axis - re-establishing the original Letchworth geometry. A landmark visible from the city and raised viewing point to look back onto the city. For the first time the city's garden masterplan structure is revealed. Surrounded by a school, community and business hub, city farm, retirement village, energy centre, transport interchange and garden centre - this is a place literally bursting with life, colour and people: a garden place at the centre of a place of gardens.

At the core of the concept is intergenerational living, those of all ages alongside, drawing and learning from each other, along with a new model in sustainable movement, a movement club, driven by smartphone access to allow booking and sharing of low carbon modes of travel. Use of the sustainable movement club will secure the option to drive through the site and exit to the south, something which would be restricted to sole occupants in private cars. Naturally, those on the e-bus or cycling will always have priority.



## The Community Hub

- The heart of life at Gardenia and beyond
- Inter-connectivity and inter-generationality
- Concentration of uses
- Completely pedestrian
- A garden at its heart

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## The Linear Garden

- The main movement spine
- Connecting garden
- Framed by 2 boulevards of trees
- Overlooked and contained by houses and apartments
- Changing character along its length
- Productive and beautiful



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## The Urban-edge Clusters

- Design to encourage community
- Higher density
- Parking integrated and adaptable for future reduction of car use

**CONNECTION TO GREEN WAY**

**NATURAL SWIMMING POND**  
The beautiful water feature is part of a sustainable drainage strategy and is 50% open water for swimming and 50% planted for wildlife.

**SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL GATE**  
Like a tree gate, access to the street is shared, carbon path through to the street access point will only be allowed for those cycling, walking, on the electric bus or sharing from the Gardenia Public Bus.

**THE SEM-AUTONOMOUS LEAF CLUSTERS**  
At the heart of these communities of houses are intimate, shared shared spaces are the outdoor rooms. They will have greenhouses, a utility, bicycle and storage areas.



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## Letchworth Gardens Quarter

### TYPICAL 'URBAN EDGE' CLUSTER





Houndwood, Street

Great Bow Yard, Langport



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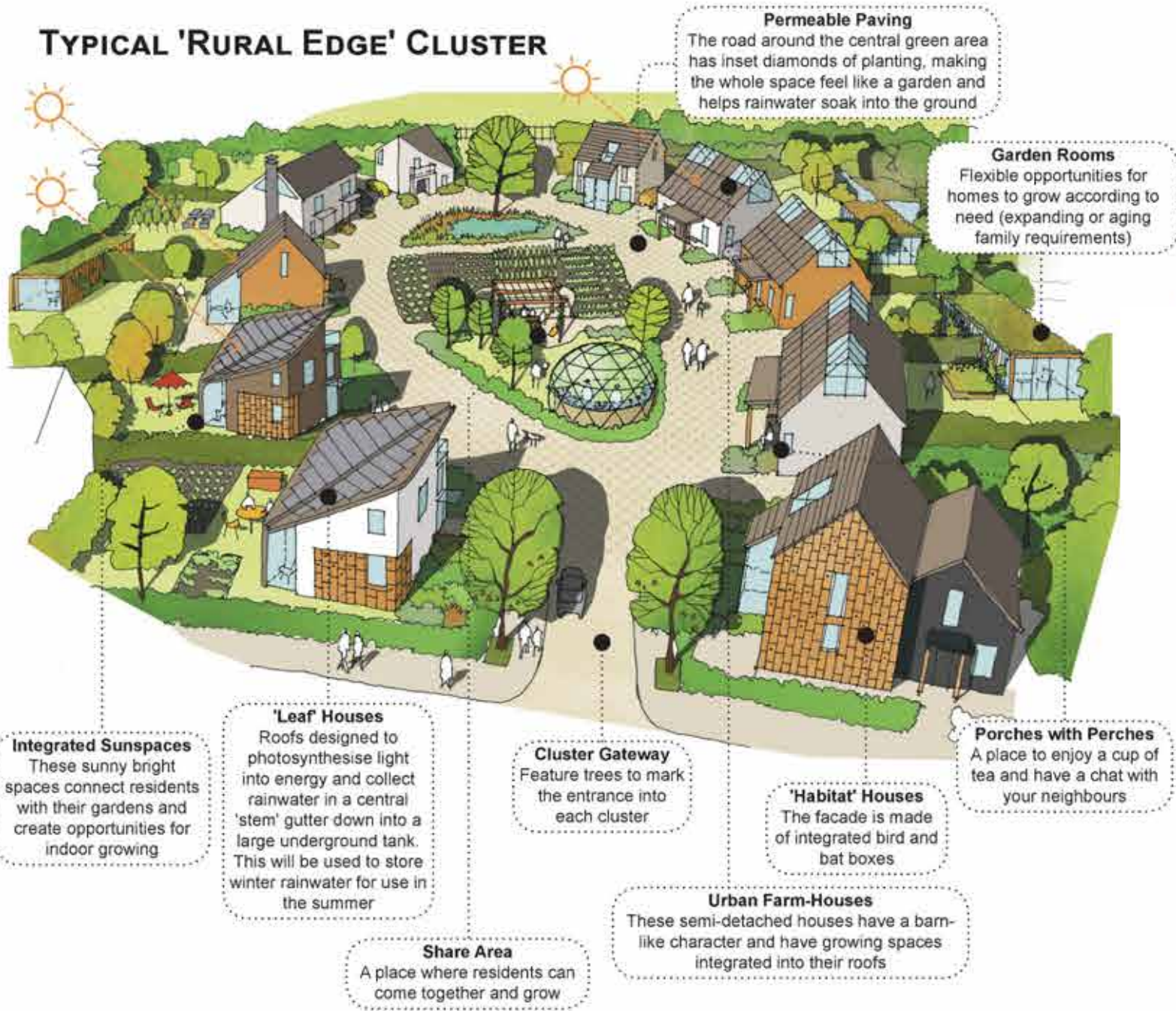


## The Rural-edge Clusters

- Transition into the countryside
- Lower density
- Parking out of sight down sides of houses
- Potential for view out to countryside and access



# TYPICAL 'RURAL EDGE' CLUSTER



**Permeable Paving**  
The road around the central green area has inset diamonds of planting, making the whole space feel like a garden and helps rainwater soak into the ground

**Garden Rooms**  
Flexible opportunities for homes to grow according to need (expanding or aging family requirements)

**Integrated Sunspaces**  
These sunny bright spaces connect residents with their gardens and create opportunities for indoor growing

**'Leaf' Houses**  
Roofs designed to photosynthesise light into energy and collect rainwater in a central 'stem' gutter down into a large underground tank. This will be used to store winter rainwater for use in the summer

**Cluster Gateway**  
Feature trees to mark the entrance into each cluster

**'Habitat' Houses**  
The facade is made of integrated bird and bat boxes

**Porches with Perches**  
A place to enjoy a cup of tea and have a chat with your neighbours

**Share Area**  
A place where residents can come together and grow

**Urban Farm-Houses**  
These semi-detached houses have a barn-like character and have growing spaces integrated into their roofs

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## The Micro Clusters

- Small car-free spaces
- Parking at cluster entrances
- Located at lowest parts of site and integrates drainage features into the landscape



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## The Linear Clusters

- Higher density – short terraces
- Views and possible links to Greenway
- Parking integrated into landscaping





Locking Parklands



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**MICRO CLUSTERS**  
These are the smaller clusters in the masterplan, in some cases just 3 or 4 homes around a green / blue garden. These are compact pedestrian spaces, with some parking or a small area of the entrance.

**ENERGY CENTRE**  
An energy centre offers a fully heating to all of the homes and community buildings. It is effectively located in the middle of the development and conveniently accessed from the main approach road, meaning deliveries can take place without blocking any traffic in the residential areas.

**COMMUNITY AND LOCAL BUSINESS HUB**  
This building offers flexible space for local businesses, grocers and retailers, as well as a village hall type space. It is the main hub of activity and its main front directly onto the main approach road, a perfect place for parents to wait before collecting their kids from school. There is also outdoor seating, a cafe, a shop + school, community hall, storage facilities and even some EBR accommodation.

**CITY FARM AND KITCHEN**  
This complex offers growing areas, gardens, pots, bins, ovens, chickens and some livestock. The kids and teachers live it. And many of the residents + huge residents will have it and restaurant will develop a healthy green food.

**MARKET SPACE**  
This space is at the centre of the community heart. It is the place where things happen and where people meet. It's where a local farmers market is held on a Saturday morning and was a place to sit in the sun with a coffee and watch people come and go. With the central garden it creates a strong sense of arrival into the development. This whole area is free of traffic.

**RETIREMENT VILLAGE**  
The retirement village ensures there is a city activity at the heart of the development. With pleasant views out to open countryside before and right next to the community and transport hub it is very conveniently located for its residents but need also being next to the garden centre and city farm and kitchen to see the school, ensuring all generations are at the heart of the site.

**PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
The primary school has been positioned so that it is next to the playing fields, with shared south-facing informal play spaces. It is also opposite the retirement village and end year together. The school children love being near the city farm and the vertical garden is a constant source of inspiration and activity.

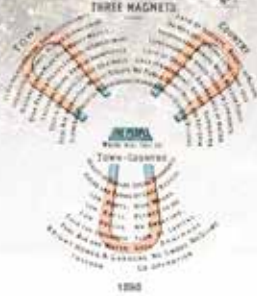
**GARDEN CENTRE AND MARKET**  
This could be more appropriate to have in the heart of Gardenia than a garden centre. It's one of the reasons the retirement village here does so well together. Community and market here with all the modern play equipment and a tree to residents to visit.

**THE LINEAR GARDEN**  
This is the main movement spine of the development - used by adults, walkers, joggers, cyclists, electric buses and other vehicles as traveling along the linear garden - going to work, going home, going to the community hub, going to school or simply going for a walk. It is a spine on the backbone of green and blue space - a backbone of green water, electricity, water, bus and other street, outdoor areas, the garden, energy garden, play gardens, sports, outdoor, urban, all other residents, schools, shops, bus and other's play areas.

**SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT INTERCHANGE**  
The home of the e-bus, a level deck, having the likes of all types, bus, bike, electric charging station, car, can, bike, electric, bus and other, the electric bus, bus, train, its own roof or other's counts, power the school transport options.

**THE PLAYING FIELDS**  
The 3 pitches on the playing fields have been slightly repositioned to increase a new boulevard line to the community heart, repositioning in the original garden city plan. The play areas have been relocated to the boulevard way.

**THE THREE MAGNETS**  
The three magnets are the school, the retirement village and the garden centre. They are positioned to attract residents to the heart of the development.



## The Meadow Clusters

- For residents who do not want to maintain their own garden
- Opportunity for managed biodiverse landscape
- Decks raised above landscape





Sea Ranch, California



Galt, Ontario



Ecological boundary with the Grange

Existing wildlife areas strengthened

And increased



# THE HOLISTIC VISION

## THE CONCEPT EXPLAINED

Gardenia is an exciting and relaxing place to live. It brings people and nature together, giving its residents and those living in the surrounding area access to an engaging landscape, while providing the community with a range of amenities at its heart. The concept is all about the seamless merging of different social, environmental and physical strategies to create a place in which people want to live.

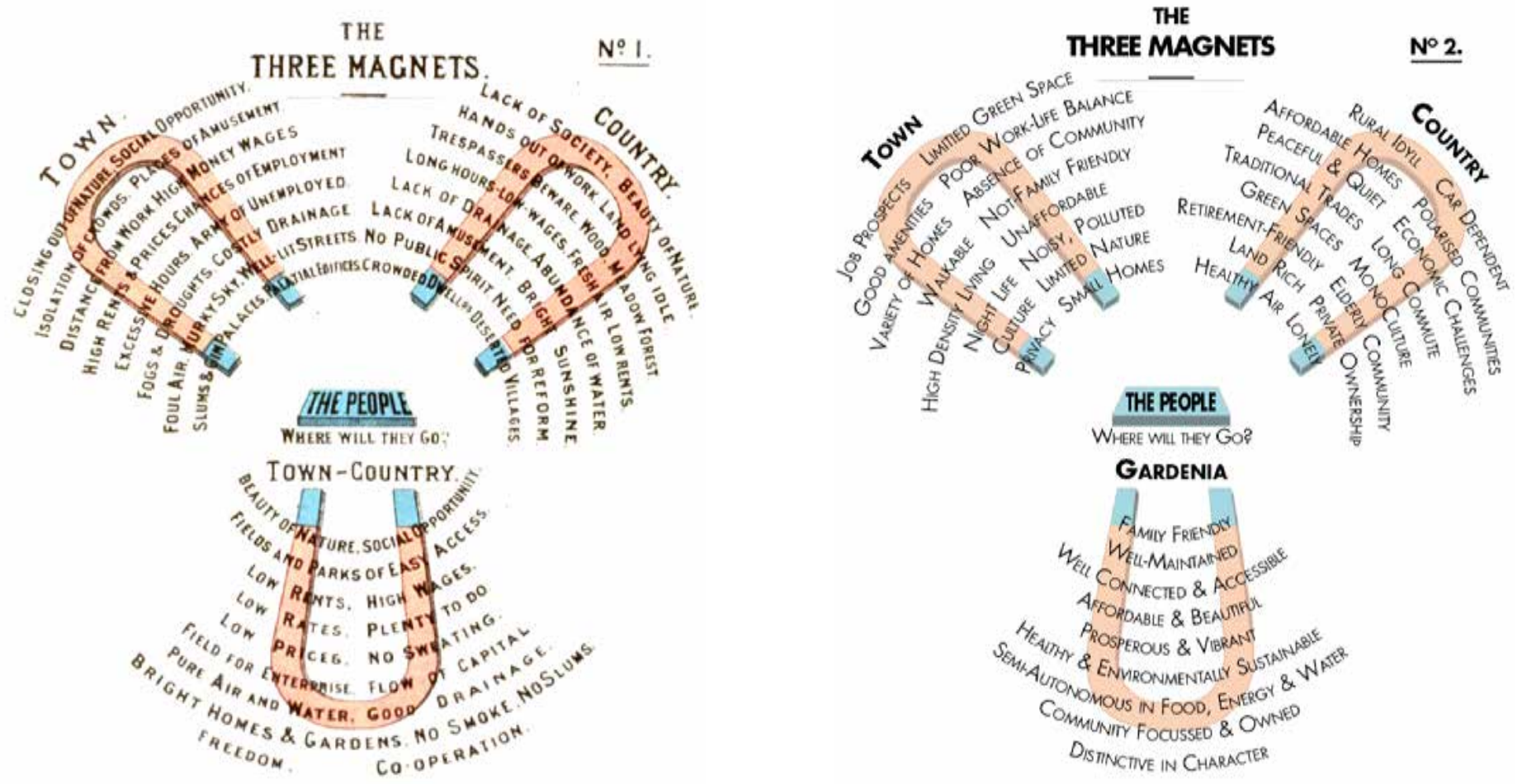
Gardenia aims to serve both body and mind, right from its heart all the way to the front door of each and every home. The green spine is what connects each cluster with the heart and the wider community, but is also a productive landscape that provides food, water attenuation, habitats and activity - a concept that permeates throughout Gardenia.

The focal point of Gardenia is the community hub that sits on Letchworth's primary axis, marked by the vertical garden. Wrapping around this are activities that bring the community together, creating a lively place throughout the day for all ages. It also has many practical functions, such as a transport hub and a plant nursery to serve Gardenia's communal landscape.





# Three magnets updated



1. CLUSTERS, NOT STREETS



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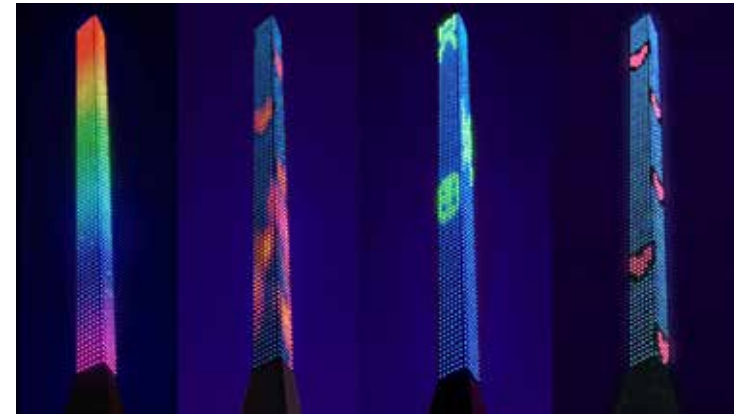
2. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE –  
FOOD, WATER, ENERGY



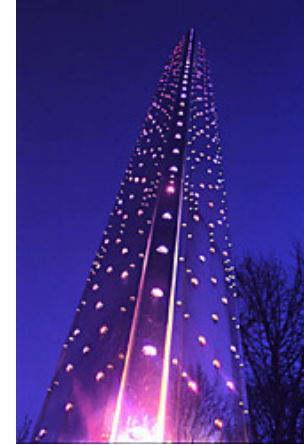
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3. RESOURCE AWARENESS / CONNECTEDNESS



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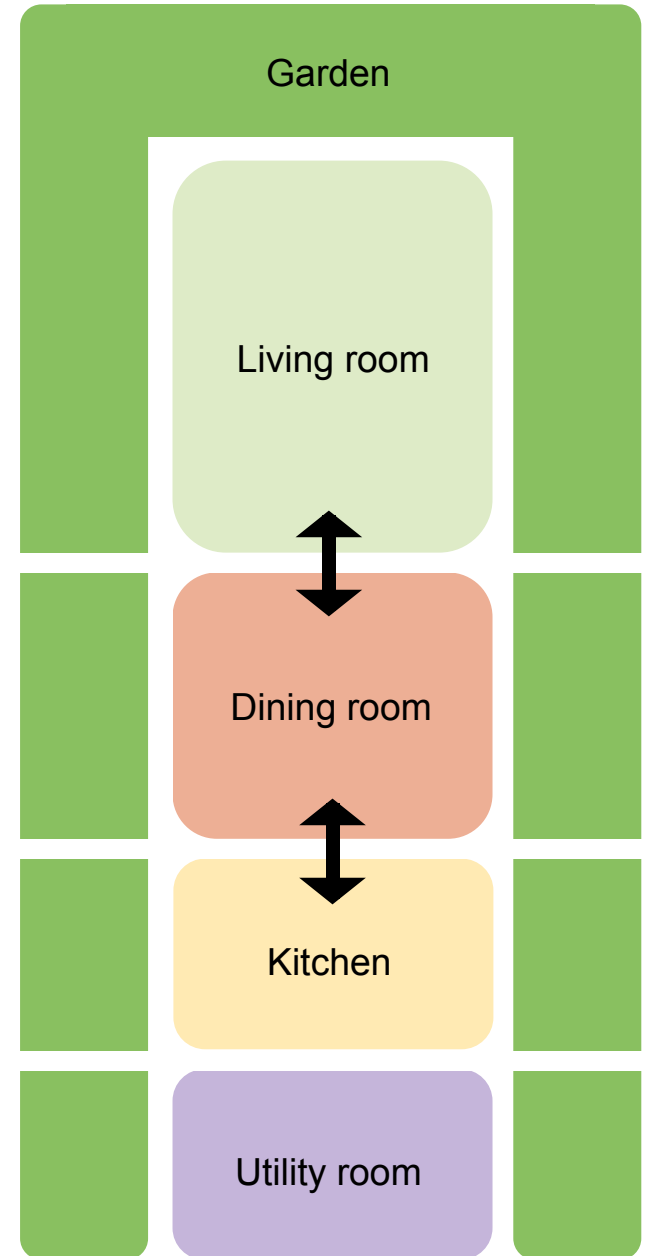
ART WITH A PURPOSE



1. CLUSTERS, NOT STREETS
2. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE – FOOD, WATER, ENERGY
3. RESOURCE AWARENESS / CONNECTEDNESS
4. SHARED 'OUTDOOR HOUSE'



Dining at the centre of the 'outside house'



1. CLUSTERS, NOT STREETS
2. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE – FOOD, WATER, ENERGY
3. RESOURCE AWARENESS / CONNECTEDNESS
4. SHARED ‘OUTDOOR HOUSE’
5. FLEXIBLE LIVING – ROOMS TO GROW



**Garden Room; to-grow**  
 Homes need to be more flexible to meet today's needs. Each Gardenia house will have a self-contained garden room that could be:

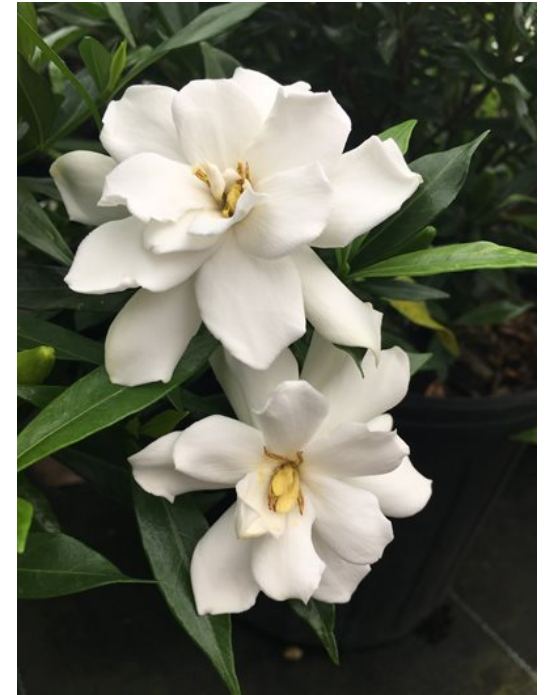
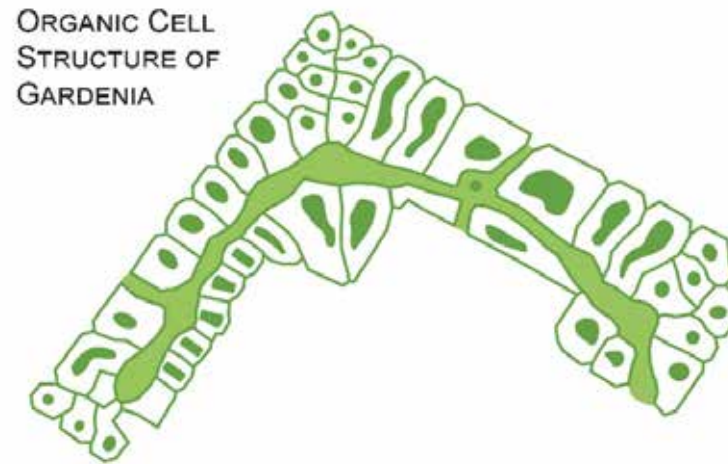
- for an elderly parent, who wants independence but to be near family
- for a grown-up child who is not yet able to afford a home of their own
- an extra bedroom for a growing family
- to support running a small business from home
- a b&b room or rented out to a longer-term lodger
- to provide extra storage space – for cycles, gardening tools and everyday stuff that clutters up the home

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2. COMMUNITY RESILIENCE – FOOD, WATER, ENERGY
3. RESOURCE AWARENESS / CONNECTEDNESS
4. SHARED ‘OUTDOOR HOUSE’
5. FLEXIBLE LIVING – ROOMS TO GROW
6. INTERGENERATIONAL LIVING





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5. FLEXIBLE LIVING – ROOMS TO GROW
6. INTERGENERATIONAL LIVING
7. NATURE ENCHANTMENT



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Leaf houses



Habitat houses



Vertical garden

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Paintworks, Bristol

**Sense of  
community**

**Connection to nature**  
- materially and  
spiritually

**GARDENIA**

**Healthy living -**  
physically and  
mentally

**Semi-autonomy - in**  
food, energy, water  
and resources