

# Housing the People

## The work of the Basildon Development Corporation started in 1951...

The 7,834 acres of land designated as Basildon New Town in 1949 contained three major settlements, large areas of substandard housing on unmade roads and poor quality agricultural land. More and better homes were required for families living in poor conditions in London following the war and there was a real need to raise standards of housing all round.

The work of the Basildon Development Corporation started in 1951 with the first new homes being built in Vange and Fryerns. Many of the first new tenants were construction workers brought in to help with the development of the town.

The early estates were very open with a high standard of landscaping. Garages were as rare as cars in those early days.

The new homes were well equipped providing in particular, modern bathrooms and kitchens.

The Development Corporation had a policy to build a wide range of homes for all sectors of the community including those on higher incomes and the elderly.

In the Development Corporations' first 21 years, they built 15,169 properties for rent and 286 for sale. 535 were also built by private developers and Housing Associations. Basildon Council was also a major housing provider, building over 2000 homes between 1946 and 1981.

In 1963 there was a shift from the traditional form of house building to system build, to enable more housing to be provided for less money. Many of the estates built during that time won awards but have not stood the test of time.

By 1968 the demand from second generation families for their own homes placed pressure on the Corporation and Council to jointly devise a better way of allocating new homes and in 1972 the right to buy policy was introduced resulting in 1,400 tenants becoming owner/occupiers.

The Council took over most of the housing stock in 1994. There was a real need for regeneration of estates by that time and new ways had to be found of achieving this. Partnership working with Housing Associations on various projects has brought great benefits to tenants in recent years in raising housing standards and the environment of estates.