

QUALITY RESIDENTIAL AREAS: AN ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITION FOR WELL-BEING AND IMPROVED COMMUNITY LIVING

Residential areas are "where a population lives". They are made up several living spaces, housing, the neighbourhood, town or municipality, linked together by a set of services that enable each resident, depending on their age and social status, to get by on a day-to-day basis.

The quality of residential areas has a proven impact on the quality of life and well-being of the population concerned.

The ESEC is endeavouring to take on board the key stakes of the

energy transition for residential areas, which include climate change and biodiversity in that these are sources of innovative solutions. Given the importance of the link between the environment, residential areas, community living and residents' well-being, the opinion seeks to promote a new form of residential area governance in which residents must absolutely have a part to play.



Dominique Allaume-Bobe

is an agricultural engineer and President of UNAF's Living Environment-Housing Department. At the ESEC, she sits on the Section for Environment where she represents the UNAF Group.

Contact:

dominique.allaume-bobe@lecese.fr
+33 (0)1 44 43 64 33

THE ESEC RECOMMENDS:

👉 I - ADDRESSING THE IMPLICATIONS OF GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE AS REGARDS RESIDENTIAL AREAS

- Fast-track the carbon component of the domestic tax on the consumption of energy products (TICPE) from 2018 to obtain additional budget revenue; use this revenue to double the amount of the energy voucher on the one hand and, on the other, supplement the programmes of the French National Housing Association (ANAH) for improving the thermal energy efficiency of housing with an extra €1-1.5bn.
- Focus the use of these additional resources on overall renovation, so as to achieve the 2025 and 2050 targets set by the Energy Transition and Green Growth Act.
- Properly assess and document the role and effects of different types of vegetation (roof gardens, planted squares) on energy consumption and temperatures in urban areas to inform decision-making and facilitate their inclusion in projects.

👉 II - INCLUDING BIODIVERSITY IN URBAN PLANNING AND CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS

- Protect and develop biodiversity in towns and cities, working from the assumption that nature plays a key role in human well-being and as a source of inspiration for new solutions.
- Systematically schedule discussions on nature in urban and real estate projects, list and protect the nature that exists during operations concerning residential areas.
- In urban areas, factor the restoration of the link between people and nature into plans to create or enhance green spaces; increase their surface area, quality and accessibility for everyone.

👉 III - FACILITATING ACTIVE MOBILITY

- Take better account of the mobility implications having an impact on health or a social dimension in projects; further develop active forms of mobility in local urban planning programmes; consider the different mobility needs of women when designing public spaces.
- Reverse the approach to urban developments and adopt an overall approach; give precedence to those who travel in the most environmentally-friendly ways, such as by walking or cycling.

- Improve the use, in terms of social ties, of private cars through car-sharing and car clubs.
- Encourage local authorities to provide businesses with shared teleworking premises within a liability framework to be clarified.
- Develop "time commitment offices" (which endeavour to take into account the different commitments households have to juggle, e.g. work/school/family/travel/leisure) following the initiative of local authorities or inter-municipalities.

👉 **IV - IDENTIFYING AND PREVENTING POLLUTION**

- Improve knowledge of new substances that are sources of pollution and types of exposure; first and foremost establish overall exposure indicators and bio-surveillance programmes.
- Perform targeted impact studies at neighbourhood level to better address environmental health issues when drawing up projects.

👉 **V - PLANNING AND ORGANISING RESILIENCE**

- In residential areas, confirm the complementary nature of adaptation to climate change policies and resilience capacities; plan for arrangements for each neighbourhood to operate in degraded mode in the event of disasters.

👉 **VI - DEVELOPING THE ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITY OF RESIDENTS**

- Encourage local authorities to support co-housing strategies.
- Give renewed stimulus to the policy aimed at creating community or family gardens ... Establish their legal status to that end.
- With support and guidance from the municipal services, develop different forms of urban micro-agriculture, along the same lines as "Incredible Edible", in an educational mindset that contributes to a sharing economy approach.

👉 **VII - DEVELOPING PUBLIC SERVICES AND SERVICES FOR THE PUBLIC BY INVOLVING ALL THE STAKEHOLDERS NECESSARY FOR A QUALITY STANDARD OF LIVING IN RESIDENTIAL AREAS**

- In order to tackle "medical deserts", rural areas with no local healthcare services, encourage groupings of the healthcare professions to set up in all their forms.
- Draft a commercial development plan with consideration taken of all the various urban strata so as to be able to come up with locally tailored solutions on request - not least on the subject of food.
- Each time this is possible, take action to stop the very last physical business from closing down by opening one-stop shops, such as "points multiservices" for example; otherwise ensure the conditions for an optimum development of local online one-stop shops.

👉 **VIII - CONCEIVING RESIDENTIAL AREAS OF THE FUTURE: URBAN AND RURAL LIVING IN NEW WAYS**

- On a voluntary basis, develop "residents' charters" to encourage their active involvement, make them more accountable and motivate them to adopt new behaviours in the context of the energy transition.
- Perform an analytical study of recent, high-performance buildings so that future regulations on energy-efficient buildings can reach the best compromise, based on the facts, between the energy consumption and carbon footprint targets - which are often conflicting.
- Advance the use of framework standards bearing on new districts (such as the EcoDistricts approach), the implementation of which is in keeping with the energy transition objectives.
- Take action to further gender equality in residential areas and urban planning by developing gender-oriented approaches in studies, by asking women what their expectations are when facilities are designed, by improving accessibility, making their mobility safer and better and ensuring that they feature symbolically in public spaces (street names for example).
- Encourage project contractors, urban planners and architects to take better account of ecological, digital and economic changes and to protect architectural quality and style - as these contribute to well-being.
- Raise the awareness of urban planners and architects of the environment-health link and of disorders associated with housing, by reforming training programmes and qualifications and strengthening continuing professional development.