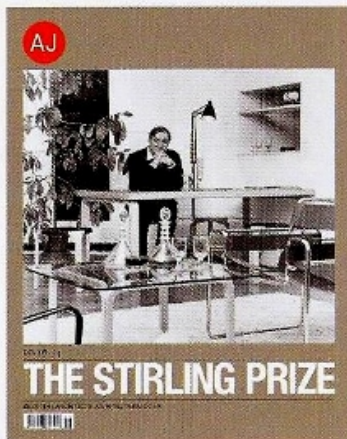


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Letters should be received by 10am on the Monday before publication. The AJ reserves the right to edit letters.

Alsop: Garden Cities suppress creativity

LETTER OF THE WEEK The term Garden City ('Clegg pledges to build five new garden cities', TheAJ.co.uk 06.10.14) is an idea about a town without substance. It has a warm feeling attached to it that denies a hidden reality. Ebbsfleet is actually a dormitory town.

One idea of the Garden City is the notion of 'the self-contained community' surrounded by green belt. One of the problems with a community is that it becomes resistant to change, which ultimately results in a group of people that find uncertainty a difficult reality to cope with.

Increasingly, uncertainty is a contemporary condition; which leads me to the conclusion that the Garden City as a concept is a contradiction to the modern social condition, unless the idea is to create compliance and conformity within our nation. This certainly suits multi-national companies and corporates, educators and government.

Revolution, naughtiness and creativity is quashed by the

creation of a dormitory town where one is condemned to commute. New towns that condemn occupants to a life which might be unhealthy is wrong and I think the solution lies elsewhere.

Will Alsop, director, aLL Design, London SW11
Read Will Alsop's full comment online at www.TheAJ.co.uk/alsop

Why Maggie's picked Leveté for new centre

Like many of your readers, I am looking forward to the completion of Amanda Leveté's projects for the V&A, for Sky and in Lisbon and Bangkok ('Amanda Leveté: the social networker', AJ 25.09.14). AL_A's response to a demanding brief such as the V&A Exhibition Road project is impressive in its subtlety and attention to detail, and that was one of many reasons we asked Amanda and her team to work with us.

Having worked with many talented architects on the challenging brief of creating a Maggie's Centre to meet the complex needs of people with cancer, I am certain of Amanda

Leveté's creative abilities and that she and her studio will make a significant and wholly positive contribution to modern British architecture. We have chosen to work with her because we believe she is one of the most talented architects around, balanced with a sensitivity and humanity that makes her a privilege to work with.

Laura Lee, chief executive, Maggie's Centres, London SW10

Value lasting qualities

Now our top architects are telling us that critical qualities of Stirling Prize winners are that they are 'newsworthy' and 'of the moment' ('Leading architects reject calls for Stirling Prize sustainability threshold', AJ 10.10.14).

If we want people to value architecture, what we need is a major prize that rewards a building's success over time with users, owners and society.

We won't attract outstanding patrons by suggesting that their building's significance will be no more enduring than a spring collection blouse.

Simon Gill, Simon Gill Architects, London SW6



The Architects' Journal
Telephone House,
69-77 Paul Street,
London EC2A 4NQ
TheAJ.co.uk
020 3033 2736
E Firstname.Surname@emap.com
T 020 3033 plus extension

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