# Retired couple's home value and wellbeing shattered by new Cashmere Park development



Martine Le Barth and her husband, retired residents of the Parklands estate in South Molton, Devon, have expressed deep distress following the unexpected development of a new housing estate adjacent to their home. After returning from a six-month holiday, the couple discovered two-storey houses towering just beyond their garden fence, disrupting not only their privacy but also their mental well-being.

According to Mrs Le Barth, their initial delight in the tranquillity of the area has turned to despair. “My mental health has been really affected and my sleeping pattern too,” she reported, revealing that she averaged just six or seven hours of sleep over three nights due to the stress of the situation. The noise from construction, which initially began at 7am each day, disrupted her daily routine. Although the hammering has since subsided, the couple still face an unrelenting visual assault from the new buildings. “Our house went from being the most desirable to the least desirable with those big buildings so close to us,” she lamented.

The new development, known as Cashmere Park, comprises 129 properties and includes a commitment to over 20% affordable housing, approved by North Devon Council in 2021. While the builders claim to offer public green space, a children's play area, and biodiversity improvements, found only in the developer's plans, Mrs Le Barth asserts that she and her husband were misled about the scale and impact of the project. She maintains that they received plans for an entirely different scheme and missed the essential consultation process, exacerbating their feelings of exclusion and disempowerment.

Compounding their distress, the couple's long-standing home, once seen as an invaluable asset, now appears to have lost significant value due to the proximity of the new builds. Mrs Le Barth expressed concern for the future, noting, “When we die, our children won’t get the value the house could have had in the first place.” Additionally, the new construction blocks sunlight from their bedroom and garden and has left them feeling overlooked in their own space. Despite requests for frosted windows to ensure some privacy, they have felt disregarded by the developers’ responses.

Their experience is not an isolated case; many residents of newly developed housing estates across Devon have reported similar grievances. Complaints regarding construction delays, poor workmanship, and a lack of promised amenities have become increasingly common. In some cases, new homeowners have faced severe issues, such as structural defects that devalued their homes to almost nothing, as in the cases of several couples in nearby Ivybridge. Increased reports of dissatisfaction focusing on the inadequacies of builders shed light on a growing crisis within the sector, as residents grapple with poor-quality housing and unfulfilled promises from developers.

This situation reflects a broader issue affecting many communities across Devon. As highlighted in various reports, the region is currently experiencing a ‘housing emergency’ driven by inflated property prices and stagnant wages, which is pushing families deeper into financial uncertainty and inadequate living conditions. Many new housing estates are chronically lacking in essential services, such as GP surgeries and schools, leading to heightened levels of frustration among local residents.

The Le Barths' plight encapsulates the profound implications of housing developments not being matched with the necessary infrastructure to support growing communities. As they continue to feel the adverse effects of living next to a construction site, their story serves as a poignant reminder of the complex realities many face in today's housing landscape.

*Reference Map:*1. Paragraph 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 2. Paragraph 6 3. Paragraph 6 4. Paragraph 7 5. Paragraph 8 6. Paragraph 8 7. Paragraph 9

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

* <https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/2053577/devon-couple-new-housing-estate-holiday-south-molton> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.devonlive.com/news/devon-news/south-molton-facebook-new-build-1995289> - A couple in South Molton, Devon, faced significant issues with their new build home, including construction delays and poor workmanship. After enduring leaky windows, blocked drains, and warped floors, they listed the property for £50,000 less than the original asking price, expressing deep dissatisfaction with the builder's response to their complaints.
* <https://www.theguardian.com/money/article/2024/jul/13/new-build-home-barratt-house> - Dayle Dixon and Mark Lee purchased a new home in Ivybridge, Devon, which was later valued at £1 due to extensive defects. Despite initial praise for the development, they encountered numerous issues, including structural problems and inadequate repairs, leading to significant stress and health concerns.
* <https://www.the-independent.com/news/uk/home-news/homes-affordable-housing-gp-surgery-schools-b2468561.html> - Residents of new housing estates have criticized developers and councils for failing to deliver promised amenities like GP surgeries, schools, and green spaces. This oversight has resulted in communities lacking essential services, negatively impacting residents' quality of life and mental health.
* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/c6p2vznp1z5o> - A report highlighted a 'housing emergency' in Devon, driven by high property prices and low incomes. The shortage of affordable homes has led to families being priced out and placed in temporary accommodation, affecting public services and the economy.
* <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/czvjj1zey2jo> - An affordable housing estate in St Ann's Chapel, near Kingsbridge, Devon, remained empty six months after its official opening due to contractor issues. Prospective tenants, like Kathy Hutchings, faced delays in moving in, leaving them in a state of uncertainty.
* <https://snagging.squarespace.com/snagging-news/how-a-couples-david-wilson-home-in-devon-became-a-disaster> - Dayle Dixon and Mark Lee's new home in Ivybridge, Devon, purchased from Barratt Developments, was valued at £1 due to severe defects. Despite initial praise for the development, they faced numerous issues, including structural problems and inadequate repairs, leading to significant stress and health concerns.