Streets remade in the sky
Park Hill
Sheffield

Hawkins\Brown
Ideal homes from a utopian dream

Loved, loathed, languished and listed. That the monumental Park Hill estate is an ideal home to so many today is no small feat. The utopian dream of the late 1950s took just three years to build, but a decade to transform it following years of notorious neglect and underinvestment. This bold solution to the post-war housing shortage needed a brave regeneration scheme half a century on.

Daring and determination have paid off. With homes remodelled and apartments filled on the famous Streets in the Sky, phase one is a residential success. Park Hill is winning over the city of Sheffield once again with its renewed sense of optimism and pride. There’s a buzz on the ground level too. From creative workplaces to shops, a microbrewery to a children’s nursery, Park Hill’s original community spirit has endured.

20 design accolades including a RIBA Stirling Prize (shortlisted) and a RIBA National Award.

“I think this scheme gives real meaning to the word regeneration; it represents a new beginning, a new vitality.”

Ivor Smith, Original architect of Park Hill
By the late 1960s, English Heritage was compelled to give Park Hill listed status. As its long-serving caretaker, Grenville Squires, succinctly put it, "the estate was in need of some tender loving care. Facing declining public investment, a developer-led design competition sought a team who could invest financially and emotionally in the estate’s regeneration. Our selection vision recognized the need to reconnect Park Hill to Sheffield and turn the development into a destination. Together with developers Urban Splash, and our collaborator Studio Egret West, we worked ten principles to help put things right, from addressing fundamental repair to how the new Park Hill would connect Sheffield.

Park Hill was pioneering in its ambition and scale. In terms of regeneration, it also has two predecessors: transforming Europe’s largest Grade II* listed structure meant addressing the project’s complexity, looking in design quality and meeting the commercial demands, especially through a recession. The scheme needed to be flexible enough to adjust. Our support as lead consultant took us on a journey with our partners from masterplanning to completion. It involved a spectrum of stakeholder negotiations, including with English Heritage, who adopted a progressive conservation approach. This allowed us to retain and reinvigorate the successful elements of the original scheme, while reworking and retaining where it had faltered.

While being sympathetic to the best of the old, the architectural interventions are very new. Park Hill’s brutalist frame is like a favourite pair of old jeans – worn, patched up and made good – but now with a jewel-encrusted belt that shimmers across the city.

The new Park Hill is now a shining beacon of light for the community asset and a new Park Hill. The once run-down estate is now a shining example of Sheffield’s resilience and community strength.

7,600 sq m of commercial space.

874 flats

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Making the most of your site

Hawkins\Brown is a modern British architectural practice with an award-winning approach to design. We put our hearts and minds into realising your project’s potential. You’ll discover creativity, commitment and a desire to collaborate to reach the best solution.

To find out more about our practice or talk to us about your project, contact:

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