

# Tunnel vision: part two

■ Our forecast of the year continues with 16 pages of comment from experts spanning the property industry

In the second part of our 2021 preview, more leading figures share their hopes and expectations for 2021. For longer versions of these comments, including resolutions, as well as a selection of video forecasts, go to [PropertyWeek.com](https://www.propertyweek.com).

## MARC VLESSING

### Chief executive, Pocket Living

Last year was an incredibly challenging one for all of us. We are delighted that we managed to keep going and welcome first-time buyers to new affordable homes in Haringey and Ealing. Some 40% of our purchasers are key workers so we know first hand the difference it has made to them to be able to get their own home during the pandemic.

This year we will complete developments in Barking, Croydon and Redbridge and start new ones in Barnet and Waltham Forest, and hopefully Greenwich and Harrow. Planning remains a critical challenge for small developers and small sites.

We need a more proportionate planning system that does not expect the same from a small site for 50 homes as one for 500 or 5,000. The cost, complexity and time taken in planning is a major reason why small developers deliver just 10% of new homes.

Research we commissioned from Lichfields found that small sites in London are taking 60 weeks on average to get planning permission; five times the statutory deadline. Greater positivity, pragmatism and proportionality in planning will result in the social, environmental and economic benefits that the country needs.



Marc Vlessing