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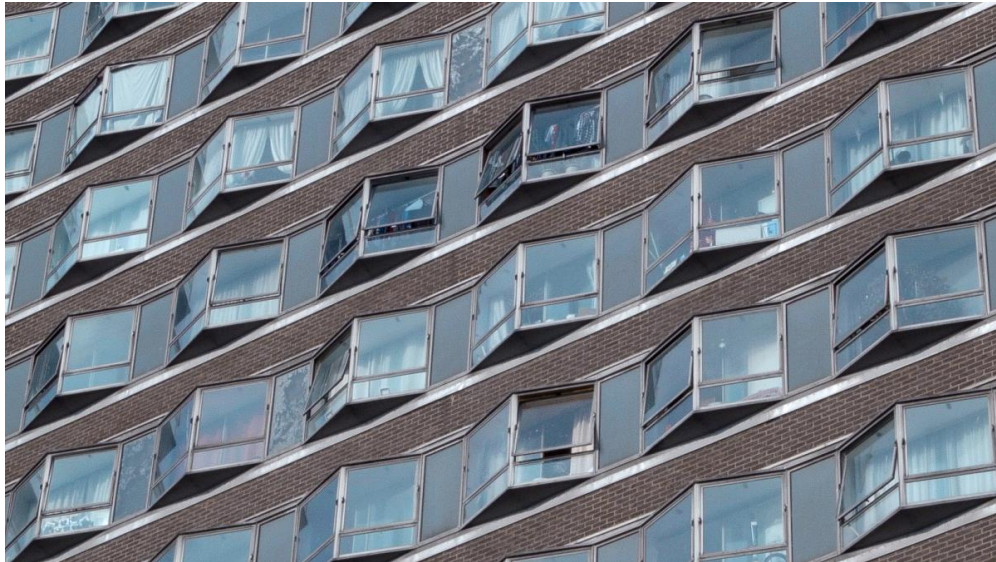
FILM REVIEW

## Film review: New Town Utopia

MENU

FRIDAY MAY 4 2018 Kevin Maher

May 4 2018, 12:01am, The Times



New Town Utopia is a documentary about postwar town planning



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★★★★☆

Consistently fascinating, timely and only slightly repetitive, this comprehensive documentary about postwar town planning unfolds like a warning from history for a Brexit-era audience about the pitfalls of sweeping social and economic changes.

Taking Basildon (it was designated a new town in 1949) in Essex as his test case, the director Christopher Ian Smith assembles a wealth of personal testimonies from residents, artists and poets, who explain the darker reality of the new-town story: how the modernist architecture created alleyways and hiding places for criminals and drug dealers, and how the attempts to forcibly

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pop music scene and the emergence of local boys Depeche Mode. But mostly this is powerful material regularly overlaid with the voice of the actor Jim Broadbent, quoting from the speeches of Lewis Silkin, the minister of town and country planning from 1945 to 1950, promising us the creation of “a new type of citizen” and “a social utopia.” As if.

**15, 81min**



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