Let’s Stop Calling This a Crisis and Start Building More Homes

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Michael Heseltine left his mark on the British landscape, and he has also had a lasting effect on the Northamptonshire landscape. His wife, Anne, shows Rachel de Thame around their arboretum.

POLITICIANS are sometimes said to be people whom legacy is destiny. Heseltine, whose name still lingers in some of the most familiar places in Britain, is one of the more celebrated examples of this phenomenon. The former Conservative prime minister and chancellor of the exchequer has been described variously as a man of many parts, a political chameleon, and a man with a gift for the unexpected. His career, spanning over four decades in politics, is a testament to his ability to reinvent himself and to adapt to changing circumstances.

In the early 1980s, Heseltine was a key figure in the Conservative government, heading up the Department of the Environment, where he oversaw the creation of the garden. This month, a book packed with photos and stories chronicles his involvement and provides an insight into his approach to design and planning. The garden, located in Northamptonshire, near the Ouse Valley, was an ambitious project designed to create a landscape that would be both beautiful and functional, incorporating the latest in ecological design principles.

Heseltine's earliest forays into landscape design were in the late 1970s, when he was invited to create an arboretum at his home in Thurso, Scotland. This was the first in a series of similar projects that would define his legacy in the field of landscape architecture. His work at Thurso and elsewhere would earn him the title of 'arboretum king', and he has gone on to create numerous arboreta across the country, each with its own unique character and focus.

Heseltine is known for his innovative approach to design, which often incorporated elements of nature and the environment. His work at Thurso, for example, featured a series of greenhouses and nursery areas that were designed to mimic the natural habitats of various plant species. This approach, which has become known as the 'arboretum effect', has had a significant impact on the way landscapes are designed and managed today.

Heseltine's work at Thurso was just the beginning of his involvement in the field of landscape design. Over the years, he has continued to create stunning gardens and arboreta, each with its own unique character and focus. His work has earned him numerous accolades, including the Royal Horticultural Society's Gold Medal for Landscape Architecture, the highest honor in the field.

Heseltine's legacy is a testament to his enduring influence on the field of landscape design. His work continues to inspire new generations of designers, and his legacy will be remembered for years to come. As the late Lord Heseltine once said, "I'm surrounded by trees, which sections of the like of this have been remembered for their ability to integrate nature and the environment into the fabric of the built environment. His work has transformed numerous landscapes, from small private gardens to large public spaces.

Heseltine's work continues to be celebrated today, with numerous events and celebrations planned to mark his 80th birthday. His legacy is a testament to his ability to adapt to changing circumstances and to create beautiful, functional landscapes that are both timeless and innovative.

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n the early part of the year, many people were getting used to the idea that our housing crisis was over. But as the spring progressed, it became clear that this was not the case. The average price of a property continued to rise, and the number of homes being built failed to keep pace with demand. This has been a frustrating time for many, as the dream of owning a home seems ever more elusive.

Some have suggested that this is a result of the government's failure to implement policies that would increase the supply of housing. Others argue that the problem lies with the market itself, which is driven by a combination of supply and demand. Whatever the cause, it is clear that the housing crisis is far from over.

Many people are now calling for a radical rethink of the way we build homes in this country. One suggestion is to incentivize developers to build more homes in areas where there is a high demand. This would help to ease the pressure on the housing market, and would also provide a boost to the local economy.

Another idea is to rethink the way we look at planning permission. Currently, many developers are deterred from building in areas where there is a high population density, because of the amount of red tape involved. If we were to simplify this process, it is possible that more homes could be built in these areas.

In conclusion, the housing crisis is far from over. We need to take a fresh look at the way we build homes in this country, and consider new ways of incentivizing developers to build more in areas where there is a high demand. Only then will we be able to tackle this difficult issue head-on.