Social Architecture includes the organisations and activities that enable people to create, run and sustain the voluntary and community groups, volunteering opportunities and social networks required for existing and new communities. It focuses on creating communities of people, complementing work to create communities of place. Social Architecture includes:

* the voluntary organisations and community groups that operate in new (and existing) communities by providing services and activities
* the communities of interest, place and culture that exist in and across localities
* the volunteers and volunteering opportunities that exist within local volunteer-involving organisations
* the networks of people and organisations that provide contacts, links and association with one another
* opportunities for social action and community engagement
* social interaction between people, neighbours and communities
* capacity building activity to support new community groups
* the recruitment, development and support of community leaders
* opportunities for social inclusion, lifelong learning and community development.

To develop effective Social Architecture new communities need:

* a meeting place or a base that is available, welcoming and accessible to all;
* access to start-up funding/small grants to stimulate grass-roots activity and capacity building;
* access to support provided by workers with community development skills who are able to mobilise the community;
* a forum or network that is inclusive, open and participatory, which is owned by and accountable to the community (e.g. a community or residents association);
* access to appropriate learning and skills development opportunities to equip people for active involvement and to support their own groups;
* a pool of volunteers, from within the community, prepared to mobilise others and organise community action.