

BUILDING FOR LIFE

THE NATIONAL STANDARD FOR
WELL-DESIGNED HOMES AND
NEIGHBOURHOODS



Presentation overview



- Our legacy
- Policy context
- The Building for Life Partnership
- Some examples: the good, the bad and the ugly
- How Building for Life is being used

Our legacy.



**BUILDING
FOR LIFE**

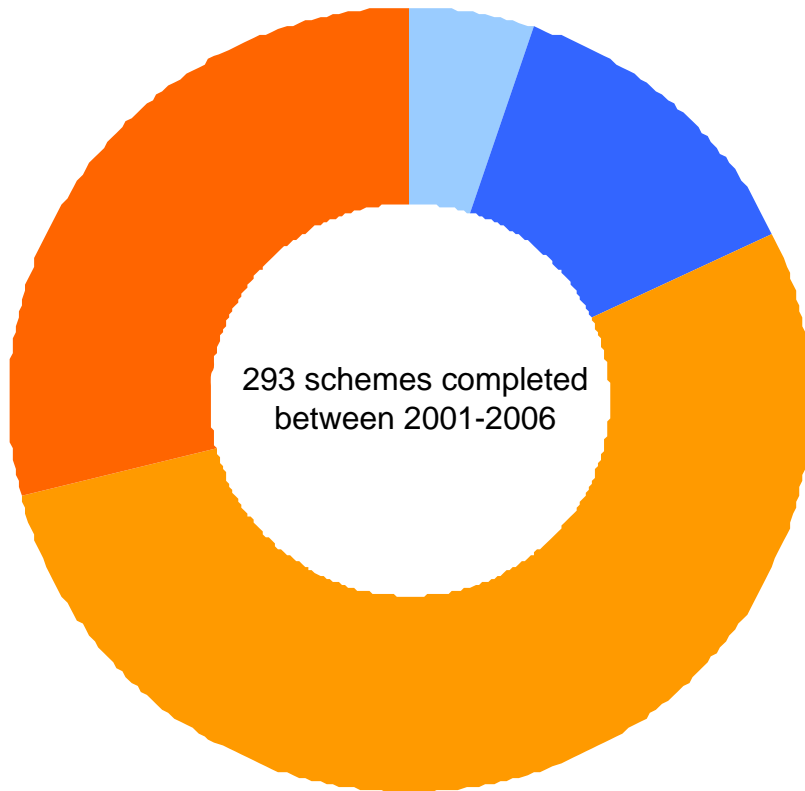
The CABE housing audit



100 schemes in each audit:

- By top 10 home builders
- In average price band
- Schemes of 20+ dwellings
- Completed within last 3 years
- Mix of size and locations
- Post-occupancy survey

The national picture



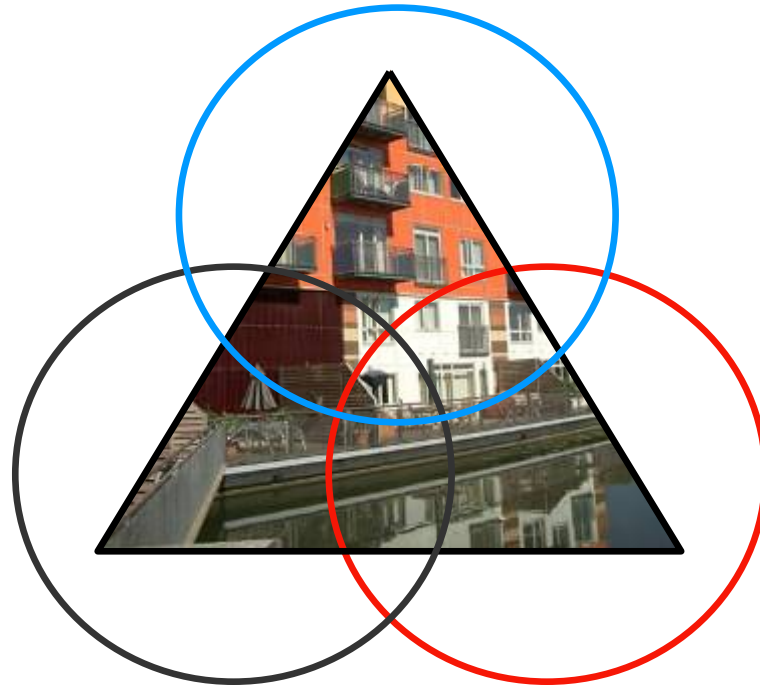
- very good 5%
- good 13%
- average 53%
- poor 29%

Making the case for good design



What is 'good design'?

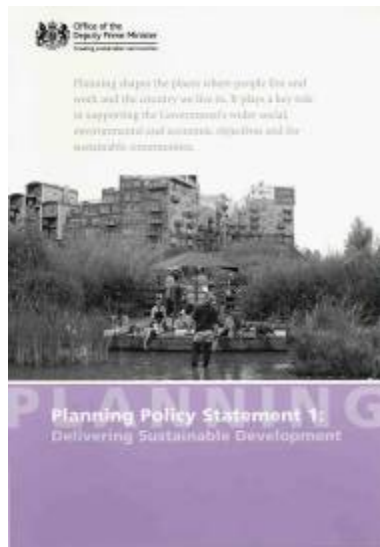
Firmness
Will it last?



Functionality
Does it work?

Delight
Does it look good?

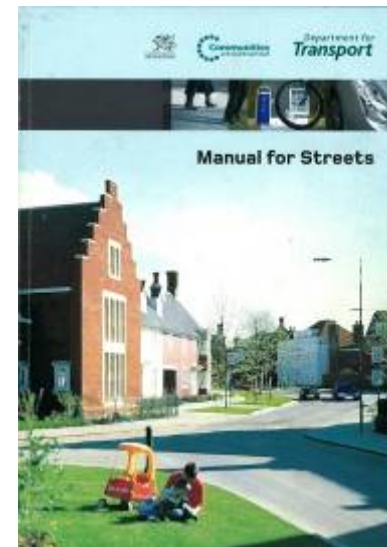
Best practice: the policy framework



PPS 1:
Sustainable development as the core principle underpinning planning



PPS 3 & CSH:
Housing



Manual for Streets
Collaborating on design across departments



PPS 12:
Integrating sustainability appraisals into the planning process

Building for Life



PPS 1

PPS 3

Code for Sustainable Homes

Lifetime Homes

Secure by Design

Safer Place

Local LDFs

Local SPDs

Enter Building for Life



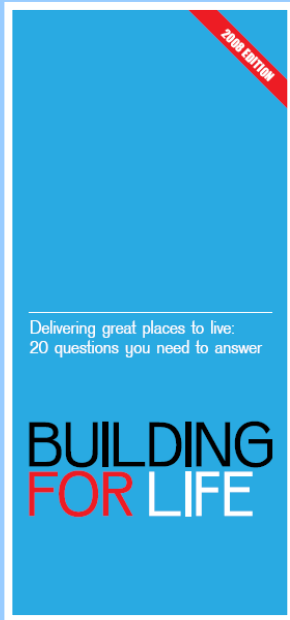
The Building for Life Partnership



Led by:

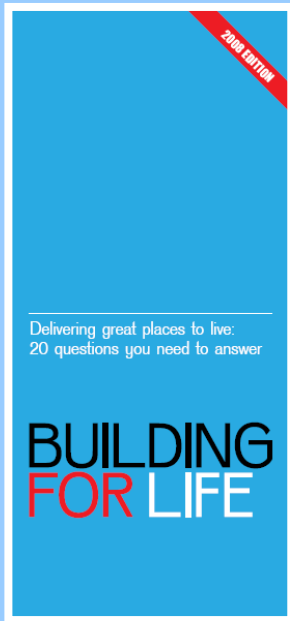
- CABE
- Home Builders Federation (HBF)

The 20 Criteria



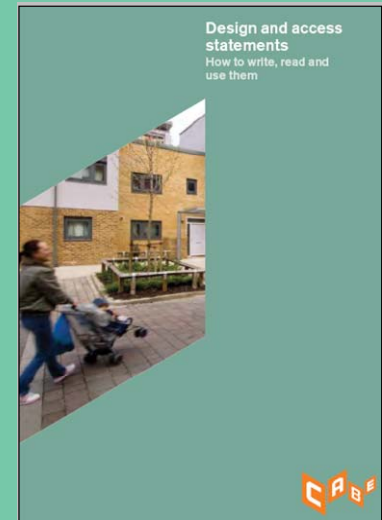
- Environment and Community
- Character
- Streets, parking & pedestrianisation
- Design and Construction

The 20 Criteria



- Environment and Community
- Character
- Streets, parking & pedestrianisation
- Design and Construction

- Use
- Amount
- Layout
- Scale
- Landscaping
- Appearance
- Access



Environment & Community



- Does the development provide community facilities, such as a school, parks, play areas, shops, pubs or cafes?
- Is there an accommodation mix that reflects the needs and aspirations of the local community?
- Is there a tenure mix that reflects the needs of the local community?
- Does the development have easy access to public transport?
- Does the development have any features that reduce its environmental impact?

Character



- Is the design specific to the scheme?
- Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscape or topography?
- Does the scheme feel like a place with distinctive character?
- Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?
- Are streets defined by a well-structured building layout?

Streets, Parking & Pedestrianisation



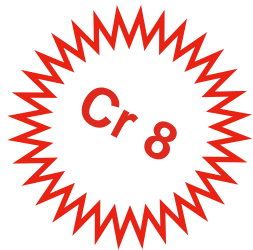
- Does the building layout take priority over the streets and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?
- Is the car parking well integrated and situated so it supports the street scene?
- Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly?
- Does the scheme integrate with existing streets, paths and surrounding development?
- Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?

Design and Construction



- Is public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?
- Do the buildings exhibit architectural quality?
- Do internal spaces and layout allow for adaptation, conversion or extension?
- Has the scheme made use of advances in construction or technology that enhance its performance, quality and attractiveness?
- Do buildings or spaces outperform statutory minima, such as building regulations?

Thinking it through: Character



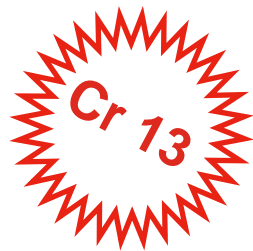
Sense of place

Thinking it through: Design and construction



Architectural quality

Thinking it through: Streets, Parking & Pedestrianisation



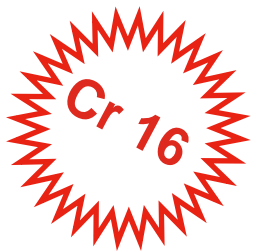
Appropriate street design

Thinking it through:
Streets, Parking & Pedestrianisation



Overlooked public space

Thinking it through: Design & Construction



Well-designed public space



Realising the vision

Promoting best practice

The Building for Life awards



Mealhouse Brow

Stockport, Manchester

Northern Counties HA
TADW



Pepys Estate

Deptford, London

Hyde Housing
BPTW



Great Bow Yard

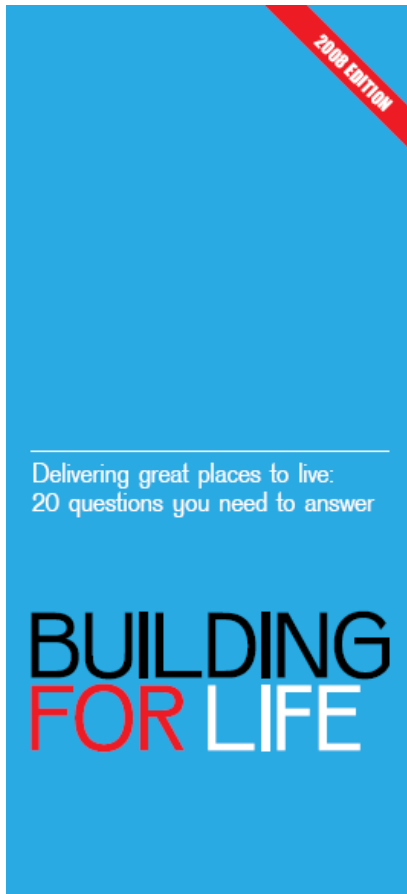
Langport, Somerset

South West Eco Homes
Stride Treglown

Points of engagement



Quality targets & planning assessments



- Homes and Communities Agency:
 - 14/20 on all owned land
 - 12/20 for all grant supported housing (NAHP)
(10/20 for rural/street fronted infill schemes)
- CLG Housing audit in the Thames Gateway:
 - 2010: 50% good (14/20) or very good (16/20), nil poor (<10/20)
 - 2015: 100% good or very good, nil poor
- Planning authorities:
Core strategy, SPD, planning discussions, monitoring

Assessment evidence guidance

BUILDING FOR LIFE

EVALUATING HOUSING PROPOSALS STEP BY STEP

Building for Life is the national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods

[K Info](#) [K How to use the guide](#)
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DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

16. IS PUBLIC SPACE WELL DESIGNED AND DOES IT HAVE SUITABLE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS IN PLACE?

The space around buildings is as important as the buildings themselves.

Any development should be able to provide some public open space, whether it is for children's play and adventure, or for reflection and learning. If this is well designed it will result in a pleasurable place that will be popular and well used. This brings with it economic, social, environmental and cultural benefits.

Good public space is usually planned for a particular use. Too often public space is the area left once buildings have been planned. This can lead to undefined areas with no specific use. Well-designed lighting, street furniture, careful detailing and attractive planting can improve the quality of public space. Uncluttered and well-maintained areas that are designed for a variety of experiences will help create places which are lively, pleasant to use and develop a sense of wellbeing among users. A maintenance plan needs to be in place from the start to guarantee long-term success.

- Evidence should show that the proposed design:
- provides high quality external space that will be well used
 - creates open spaces that are shaped and defined by surrounding buildings
 - gives consideration to the best location, access and planned uses for public space
 - gives due care to the durability of chosen materials and detailing
 - provides adequate lighting to enhance safety during the day and at night
 - promotes natural and informal surveillance of streets, public open spaces and courtyard areas
 - includes a viable strategy for the management and maintenance of the public realm

This could be provided with evidence around the following themes:

- Layouts (including context)
- Overall views
- Views within the scheme
- Public realm / open space

Relevant visual evidence



ENVIRONMENT AND CONTEXT	SYMBOLS, GRAPHICS AND REPRESENTATION
1 2 3 4 5	11 12 13 14 15
CHARACTER	DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
6 7 8 9 10	16 17 18 19 20
K Further Reading	K Info K Contents

TOWNSCAPE AND LEGIBILITY

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The conceptual diagram focuses specifically on the streets and key spaces within the new development. It helps highlight the clear structure of the proposed layout and how this could help people find their way.

Relevant criteria: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

ENVIRONMENT AND CONTEXT: 1 2 3 4 5

SYMBOLS, GRAPHICS AND REPRESENTATION: 11 12 13 14 15

CHARACTER: 6 7 8 9 10

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OVERALL VIEWS

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The perspective sketch provides an overall view of the scheme from the air, giving a good impression of the overall character of the development, and the layout of outdoor and open spaces. It also shows how the proposed buildings relate to the public realm, providing really nice views and areas of buildings and how they relate to streets and open spaces.

Relevant criteria: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

ENVIRONMENT AND CONTEXT: 1 2 3 4 5

SYMBOLS, GRAPHICS AND REPRESENTATION: 11 12 13 14 15

CHARACTER: 6 7 8 9 10

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION: 16 17 18 19 20

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www.buildingforlife.org/publications

BUILDING FOR LIFE

Accredited Assessors: How it will work

- at least one accredited assessor embedded in every LPA in England
- additional independent accredited assessors
- each assessor will be asked to submit at least 1 assessment p/a for quality monitoring
- every BfL assessment will be registered with the Building for Life team

Accredited Assessors: What they do

- look at a proposed designs for new housing development and assess their potential to meet the Building for Life criteria
- input into assessments of completed housing developments for Annual Monitoring Returns
- embedded assessors do this as part of their work on a proposed development. They will do this as part of their everyday job.
- independent assessors support embedded assessors in their work. Their work on BfL will be paid separately.

Accredited Assessors: What they do

The assessors work will usually conclude with an evaluation report.

This report might be referred to by:

- planning officers or by the planning committee
- funders or landowners who have committed to a minimum standard
- the researchers, panel and final judges for the Building for Life awards

Accredited Assessors: How to become one....next steps

To gain accreditation, candidates should

- Log on to www.buildingforlife.org/assessors/tools
- Download the Upper Redhill documentation, the reporting template and the BfL policy comparison table
- take role of a primary assessor and produce a full report (ca 1.5 days) for the example Design and Access statement
- submit their assessment and policy table to enquiries@buildingforlife.org by end of Tuesday June 30th

Accredited Assessors: How to become one....next steps

The Building for Life team will

- check candidate's assessment against the target score
- provide feedback on the way in which the score was evidenced
- quantify the variance across assessors for future monitoring
- send candidates a formal letter of accreditation

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Thank you

enquiries@buildingforlife.org

www.buildingforlife.org



Also supported by English Partnerships, the Housing Corporation and The Civic Trust