

DESIGN BRIEFS

GOOD PRACTICE AND BESPOKE GUIDES FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROVIDERS

Confirming our position as one of the country's leading and longest established advisers to affordable housing providers, HATC has produced a number of guides for regulatory authorities, which are considered to be essential reading for all affordable housing providers. Two of our recent publications are the new guidance on The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment's (CABE's) *Building for Life*, published by the Housing Corporation in September 2008, and the National Housing Federation's *Guide to Standards and Quality in Development*, published in July 2008. This is an update of the original Guide produced by HATC's Andrew Drury in 1998.

In addition to these published guides, our experience and practical skills in the area of design guidance mean that we are also regularly approached by affordable housing providers, local authorities and arm's-length management organisations (ALMOs) to produce bespoke guides and design briefs. More details are provided overleaf.

HATC's team are all affordable housing practitioners. Our design briefs incorporate jargon-busting help and tips. We help project staff, who are usually not well-versed in urban design and architecture, to understand issues such as *Building for Life*. In effect we can provide a useful 'translation' service, helping your project teams gain a better understanding of the requirements of the Homes and Communities Agency, local planning authorities and local authorities disposing of land.

If you would like to receive copies of any of the above published reports or to discuss your specific needs, call Andrew Drury on 01943 604259 or email enquiries@hatc.co.uk



"This guide aims to help affordable housing providers better understand the terminology, concepts and processes that are involved in meeting the standards' criteria."

Housing Corporation



"A clear, jargon-free, authoritative source book on the specification and quality processes across the range of development issues."

The National Housing Federation



"Speaking your language - design briefs and consultants' guides tailored to your requirements by HATC"

PUBLISHED DESIGN GUIDES

HATC has extensive experience of taking the mystique out of design language and translating it into practical guides published by national bodies, such as the Housing Corporation and the National Housing Federation.

The Housing Corporation's *Achieving Building for Life*

by Andrew Drury and Lesley Johnson

Building for Life (B4L) was developed by CABE in 2003, and adopted by the Housing Corporation as a grant-compliance requirement in April 2008. Affordable housing providers' staff need to understand the urban design issues behind the 20 B4L questions in order to maximise the chances of a successful B4L assessment of projects in the future. The Housing Corporation's *Achieving Building for Life*, written by HATC's Andrew Drury and Lesley Johnson, examines these questions and provides a series of expectations, clarifying the issues that each question seeks to address. CABE co-sponsored this guidance, helping to ensure consistent application of the B4L requirements in the future.

National Housing Federation's *Guide to Standards and Quality in Development*

by Andrew Drury

IN 1997, HATC was commissioned by the National Housing Federation (NHF) to produce *A Guide to Standards & Quality in Development: a Good Practice Guide* and we are delighted to have been asked to update it and produce the 2nd edition.

Described by the NHF as 'a clear, jargon-free, authoritative source book' it contains advice and standards covering the key skills needed in the development process, and how to manage the design process successfully.

Whilst setting essential and recommended standards, it also provides explanations of the key urban design issues addressed in *Building for Life*, *Urban Design Compendium*, *Manual for Streets* and *Better Places to Live* (the companion design guide to PPS3). It also clarifies internal environment issues, including internal space standards, standards for communal / shared areas, the cost in use of the home, for both the tenant (energy and water use) and landlord (lifecycle costing), as well as approaches to achieving Levels 3 and 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Accessibility requirements are embedded throughout the document.

For a development project to run smoothly, it is essential that the whole team is speaking the same language. A practical understanding of the terminology and concepts used by architects and urban planners will improve the ability of you and your team to evaluate the designs proposed by your design professionals.

Case Study: Newlon Housing Trust

Design Brief: Newlon Housing Trust commissioned HATC to review and update its Design Brief, to reflect changes in funding requirements and market expectations.

Consultants Brief: Newlon also wished to improve communications between the Trust and its consultants in order to improve project management performance. The result was a new Consultant's Procedure Guide, produced by HATC. This sets out the Trust's detailed requirements of their various consultants, so that everyone is clear what information has to be provided by whom and when. The Guide was structured so that it reflects the reader's (i.e. the consultant's) perspective and language rather than the Trust's, thus ensuring that nothing gets 'lost in translation' between the two parties.

BESPOKE GUIDES

HATC has established a reputation for providing a fully-rounded consultancy service for affordable housing providers: ranging from strategy development at the highest level to practical hands-on project management. This gives us a particular ability to translate top-level design ideas into clear, jargon-free, practical action points – and vice versa.

As a result, we are regularly approached by housing associations, local authorities and ALMOs to produce bespoke consultant's procedure guides and design briefs.

TO DISCUSS HOW WE MAY PRODUCE BESPOKE GUIDES FOR YOU, CONTACT
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