



The housing audit

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The context – a changing picture



- PPS1 and the new PPS3
- Wealth of guidance
- Exemplary schemes in every region
- A gradual shift in culture and in business strategy

But this audit has some blunt messages...



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- 97% of new private housing built in the East Midlands in the last five years is not good enough
 - Things are changing, but the change is too little and too slow
 - We need a revolution in housing design, not least to deliver the challenge of zero carbon homes



There are some good
new developments

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Jupiter, Birmingham



- Redrow
- Number of homes: 267
- Audit score: 80%



Freemens Meadow, Leicester



- Barratt
- Number of homes: 475
- Audit score: 84%



Dukes Rise, Shepton Mallet



- Bloor Homes
- Number of homes: 109
- Audit score: 76%





But many more are
pretty poor...

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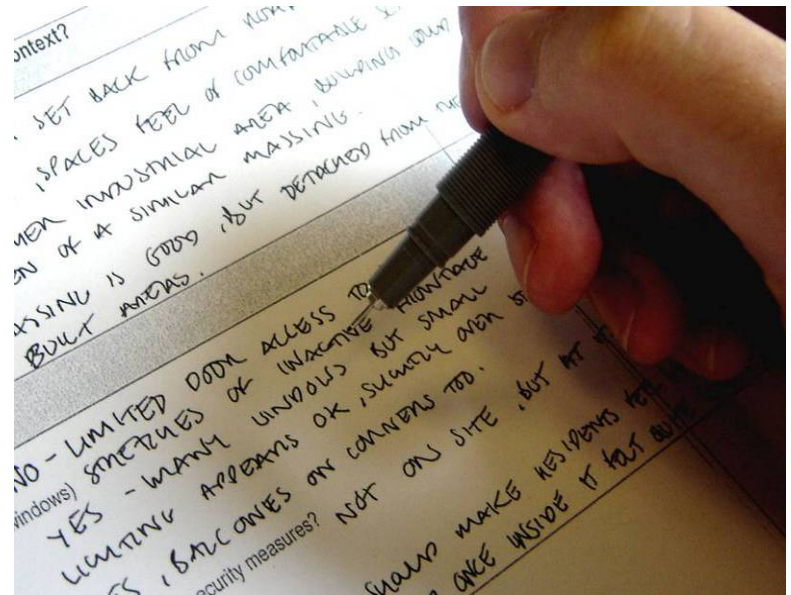
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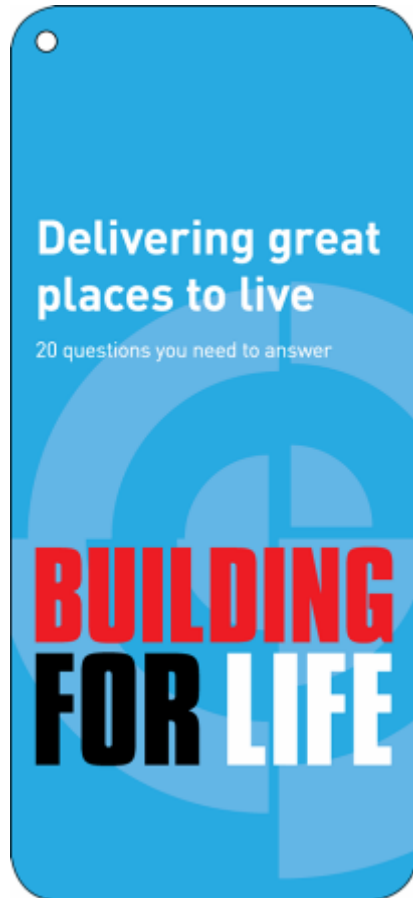
The research process



- 293 schemes assessed
- By top 10 home builders in each region
- In average price band
- 20+ dwellings
- Mix of sizes, locations, types, tenures and contexts



How we assessed schemes



Building for Life criteria

20 questions, four categories:

1. Character
2. Roads, parking and pedestrianisation
3. Design and construction
4. Environment and community

www.buildingforlife.org

Building for Life – a growing influence



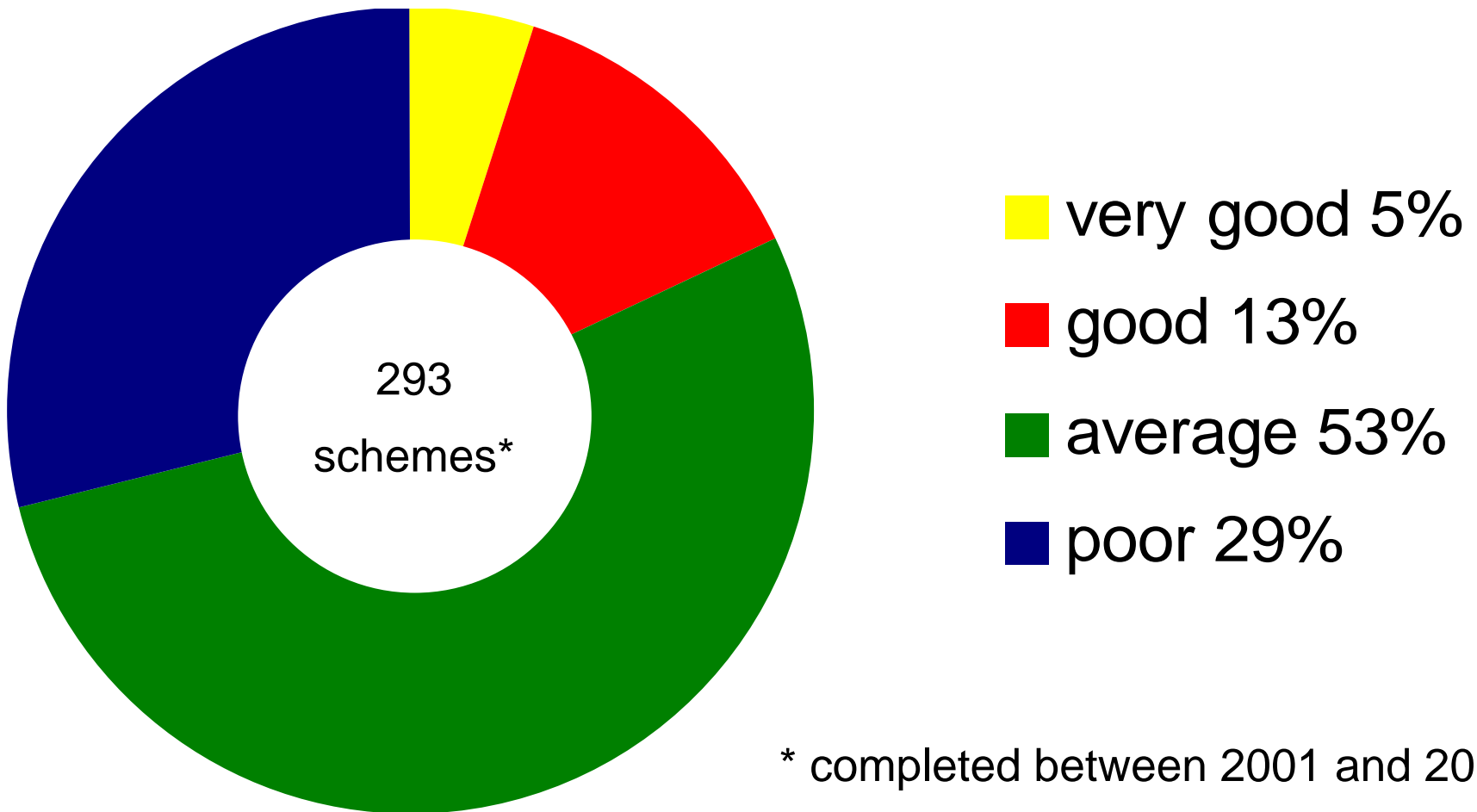
- English Partnerships now require schemes built on its land to achieve a Silver Standard
- The Housing Corporation have also tied grant support to the Standard
- The government has committed that every new Thames Gateway scheme will meet the BfL Standard
- Local authorities and HMR pathfinders are signing up

How we scored them



80% +	Very good	Exemplary
70-80%	Good	The baseline for good design
50-70%	Average	A missed opportunity
0-50%	Poor	Should not have been given planning permission

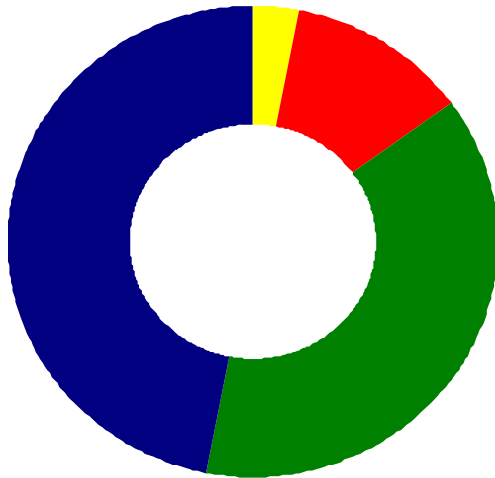
The national picture



The latest results

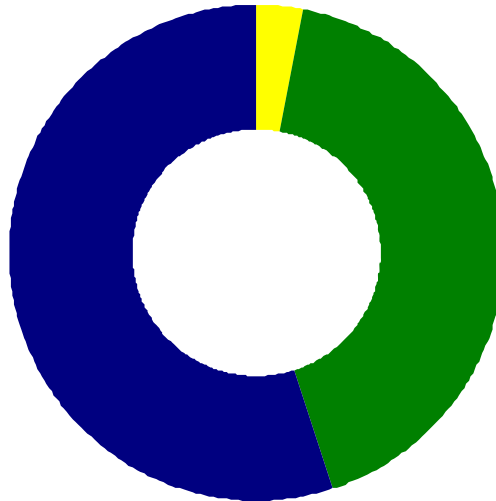


West Midlands



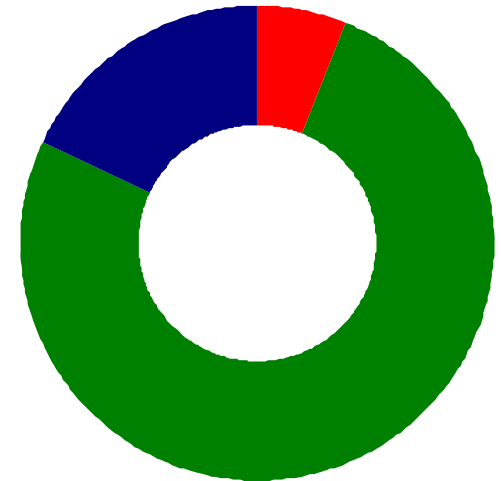
- very good 3%
- good 12%
- average 38%
- poor 47%

East Midlands



- very good 3%
- good 0%
- average 42%
- poor 55%

South West

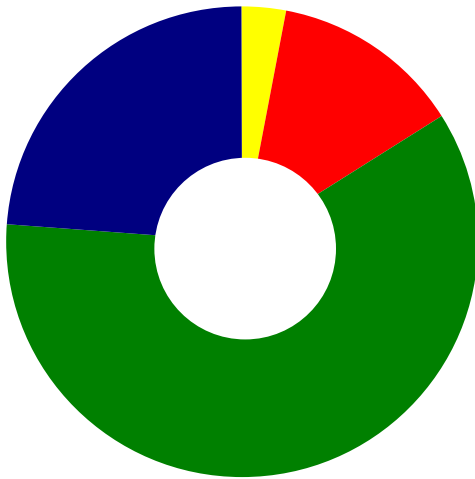


- very good 0%
- good 6%
- average 76%
- poor 18%

Across the country

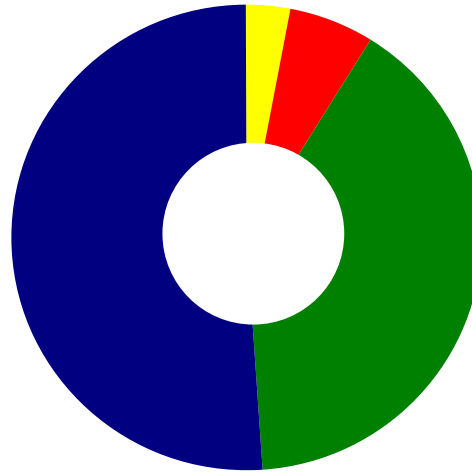


North



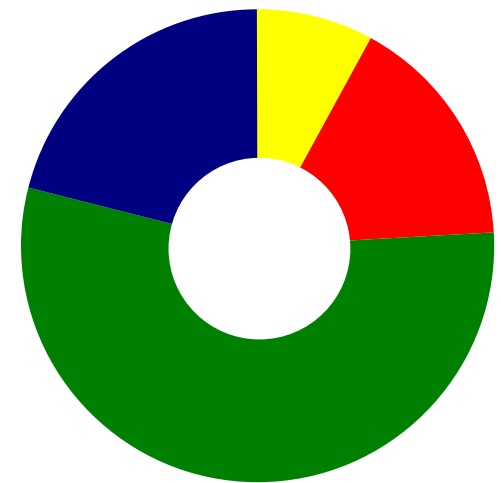
- very good 3%
- good 13%
- average 60%
- poor 24%

Midlands



- very good 3%
- good 6%
- average 40%
- poor 51%

South



- very good 8%
- good 16%
- average 54%
- poor 21%



So what's going wrong?

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Place making



- Failing to create a sense of place
- Not taking advantage of surroundings and the local context
- Not creating an identity or distinct character



Urban design



- Poorly structured layout
- Poor quality streetscape
- Lack of distinction between public and private realms
- Difficult to navigate



Public realm



- Dominant roads
- Poorly integrated car parking
- Highways, not buildings, dictating the layout
- Public open space poorly designed or maintained





The keys to success

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1. Leadership

- Good or better design will result where at least one agency – landowner, local authority, social landlord or developer – has strong aspirations for achieving good design, and the resources to deliver it
- In none of the six case studies was this provided by the developer

2. Skills



- Collaboration creates the potential for good design, but only if the urban design skills exist in one or more of the partners

3. Strategy

- You need development frameworks, briefs and masterplans to deliver good design – but they're not enough on their own
- Both planners and developers need detailed guidance, and a mechanism to ensure that high quality is actually delivered on the ground

4. Highways

- Building layout should dictate highway layout – not the other way round
- If you consider highways design in isolation from a strategy for place-making it usually has a negative impact on design quality.



So what needs to be done?

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Local authorities...



- **Deliver on PPS3:** “local authorities should turn down poor quality applications” (Yvette Cooper)
- Develop thorough **local design policies**, setting out what they expect of developers, and adopt Building for Life explicitly within them
- Develop shared **urban design resources**, where individual authorities cannot retain the expertise in-house

Developers...



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- Focus on generating **development value**, not just managing development cost
 - Gather sufficient **management information** to inform their strategy and monitor the quality of output across different regional business units
 - Strengthen their **design capacity** – both centrally and regionally – and appoint a design champion to provide the leadership required within and outside of the company



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- Back the commitment to design quality in PPS3 with a robust and light-weight **mechanism for measuring** it
 - Tie **housing and planning delivery grant** to high quality outcomes, as well as the delivery of housing numbers
 - Ensure that **government offices** make certain that the **RSS and each LDF** sets out clearly what they expect in terms of design quality

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- Deepen our existing work in three key areas:
 - giving **expert practical advice** across the housing growth and market renewal areas
 - providing **design guidance** to every planner in the country
 - **using design review** to influence every significant housing development nationwide

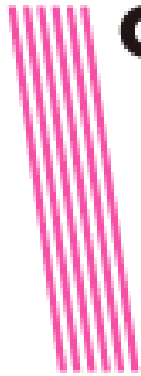


Emerging work in the East Midlands

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Opun – the Architecture and Built Environment Centre for the East Midlands




OPUN

- New residential design guide
- Local sustainable design forum:
 - Partnership with Housing Corporation
 - Form of regional design review involving all stakeholders (including the public)
 - First meeting in July
 - Full details at: www.housingcorp.gov.uk/LSDF


Architecture week (15-24 June)



- This year's theme is 'How green is our space?'
- 80 events taking place across the region
- Full details at www.architectureweek.co.uk/



region guides organise events schools children features about supporters



East Midlands

The main theme for ARCHITECTURE WEEK 2007 in the East Midlands is 'How green is Our Space?' and there are over 80 events for people of all ages and interests to come and enjoy.

Buildings contribute around 50% of the UK's carbon emissions, houses make up 25% of that. Architecture Week aims to make us all think about how 'green' our homes, workplaces and schools are, and how we can improve the spaces where we live and work to make them sustainable.

If you are interested in an event look at the full details on the web site - if you need more information please contact:


Jasia McArdle and Alan Cooper
AW07 East Midlands Coordinators

Call: 08702 404459
Or email: aw07@opun.org.uk

All East Midlands Events


Highlight events

Architecture in Miniature



Alan Graham produces architecture in miniature for clients, developers and architect: to get a realistic view of their proposals.

Art and the Community



An innovative eco sculpture of

So, in summary



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- There are signs of progress, but the baseline is very, very low
 - Consistency is pivotal: consistent regulation through the planning system, and consistent performance within and across each volume house builder
 - We need to accelerate the pace of improvement as a matter of urgency – **without the quality, we will struggle to deliver the numbers.**



Thank you for listening.

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