

## **BUILDING FOR LIFE FACT SHEET**

### **May 2010**

#### **What is Building for Life?**

Building for Life is run by **CABE** and the **Home Builders Federation** with **Design for Homes**. Building for Life is the national standard for well-designed homes and neighbourhoods. Good quality housing design can improve social wellbeing and quality of life by reducing crime, improving public health, easing transport problems and increasing property values.

Building for Life promotes design excellence and celebrates best practice in the house building industry. New housing developments are scored against the criteria to assess the quality of their design.

The 20 Building for Life criteria can be used for informal assessments including by design review panels.

#### **How does Building for Life work?**

**Building for Life assessments** score the design quality of planned or completed housing developments against the 20 Building for Life criteria (<http://www.buildingforlife.org/criteria>). Anyone can do an informal assessment but formal assessments can only be carried out by an accredited Building for Life assessor.

**Building for Life standards** are given to all entries to the Building for Life awards that score more than 14/20. Schemes that score 14/20 or 15/20 receive the silver standard while schemes scoring 16/20 or more receive the gold standard.

#### **How can you become an assessor?**

Only local authority planning officers can currently be trained to become Building for Life assessors. CABE has been funded by Communities and Local Government (CLG) to train one assessor in each local authority in England by 2011.

Training requires an officer to complete the following to become accredited:

- Attend a one-day training workshop, by invitation only, to be introduced to the Building for Life criteria, see how the criteria can affect the quality of a residential development, and learn how to conduct a Building for Life assessment
- Complete some independent work and return it for review. This includes completing an assessment on a sample planning proposal and referencing the 20 criteria against local planning policies
- Sign up to the code of conduct

A number of the architecture and built environment centres work with CABE to deliver facilitator training.

#### **Who requires Building for Life?**

##### **Communities and Local Government**

CLG asks local planning authorities to conduct Building for Life assessments of developments and report back on design quality.

***Homes and Communities Agency***

HCA requires developers be able to demonstrate how they address the Building for Life criteria if they are bidding for National Affordable Housing Programme grant funding or are proposing a residential development on HCA land.

***Local planning authorities***

Many local planning authorities require planning applicants to demonstrate how they have addressed the 20 questions. This might be a requirement within the local development framework or supplementary planning guidance.

**Further information**

For further detailed information see: [www.buildingforlife.org](http://www.buildingforlife.org)

For publications see: [www.buildingforlife.org/publications](http://www.buildingforlife.org/publications)

Building for Life awards: [www.buildingforlife.org/awards](http://www.buildingforlife.org/awards)

Building for Life case studies: [www.buildingforlife.org/case-studies](http://www.buildingforlife.org/case-studies)