



Home Builder Edition

A guide to ourplace™

Helping you find your ideal place to live

What is ourplace™?

ourplace™ is an innovative new service (created and managed by North West Leicestershire Council) that seeks to improve the design quality of new homes and neighbourhoods by providing home buyers with an easy to understand rating system. Our rating system is based on the Building for Life standard - the national standard for new homes and neighbourhoods.

Our philosophy is simple. We believe that if home buyers are offered an easy way to identify good design, design standards will be driven up by more discerning purchasers.

We also understand that when buying a home, it is a good idea to have as much information about the place you're considering moving to.

For the first time, home buyers will be able to find out how a particular development will potentially perform against the national Building for Life standard.¹

Our simple and clear ratings certificates will help home buyers to easily compare developments as they look for their ideal place to live.

Building for Life is a scheme organised and established by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the Home Builders Federation (HBF). Further details can be found at www.buildingforlife.org.

Front cover image courtesy of Davidsons Group, Ibstock, Leicestershire. www.davidsonsgroup.co.uk and Charnwood Borough Council.

¹The rating awarded does not necessarily imply that a scheme would merit a Building for Life award. Building for Life awards are only awarded post completion by the Building for Life partners (CABE and the HBF). The rating awarded does not represent the official opinion of CABE on the design quality of a particular scheme. CABE's official view is expressed through its Design Review Panel. Any disputes relating to the rating should be directed to the Council's accredited assessor, not CABE. Please also refer our 'small print' on the rear of this brochure.



A place with shops a short walk from home

Find your ideal place to live at www.findourplace.com

An easy to understand four tier rating system

ourplace™ involves the Council's Accredited Building for Life assessor assessing schemes against the national standard on the basis of evidence supplied by the applicant in their planning application.

If a scheme is granted planning consent (either by the Council or by virtue of an appeal decision), a certificate with one of four rating tiers will be issued to the developer to display in their Sales Office. This rating will also be published on our website.

If developers successfully demonstrate that their proposals would meet 14 or more of the 20 criteria¹, they will be awarded either an 'A+' or 'A' rating. Currently only 18% of developments nationwide meet these rating tiers². Developments that meet less than 14 criteria³ will be awarded either a 'B' or 'C' rating.

We recommend that developers take some time to review recently completed developments to see how they perform against the Building for Life standard. We also suggest that developers explore their working practices and ask themselves a few key questions, such as:

- Does our business value good design?
- Is our business geared towards delivering better design – do we have the right skills and processes in place?
- Are we ambitious about design?
- Are we going to introduce a Key Performance Indicator related to Building for Life performance?

Don't forget that to achieve a rating there are many criteria combinations. Therefore it's important that your Sales Advisors have a copy of the 'Building for Life score sheet' on site in case potential home buyers are looking for certain qualities.

Please see the rating table on the rear cover for more details.

1. As determined by the Council's Accredited Building for Life assessor.

2. CABE (2007) Housing Audit, Assessing the Design Quality of New Housing in the East Midlands, West Midlands and the South West.

3. Developers can usually choose any combination of the criteria although some local authorities may specify compulsory criteria.



A place of my own

Find your ideal place to live www.findourplace.com

Marketing well designed places

Good design can help developers avoid costly delays, enabling them to realise the value of their assets sooner and help the country deliver the new homes it needs.

Homes and neighbourhoods that are well designed are also more likely to retain their value and increase in value over time¹.

If you secure an 'A+' or 'A' rating, you'll want to make sure everyone knows about it. For the first time, you'll have the opportunity to market your product in a brand new way.

If you secure an 'A+' or 'A' rating, you'll be able to use ourplace™ branding on your marketing materials². From brochures, local property guides, to site flags you'll be able to easily differentiate your development from the competition.



1. CABE, (2006) The Value Handbook – Making The Most From Your Buildings and Spaces.

2. Subject to licence. Licences only apply to a named development.

Right: example of an ourplace™ certificate issued by South Derbyshire District.

Left: Example of on site branded marketing material.

Development

Millbrook (Phase 1)

Development location

Melbourne, Derbyshire

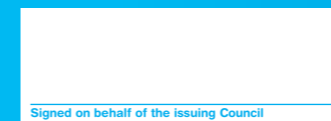
Developer

Davidsons

has been awarded the following rating



To check the validity of this certificate and find out more about the rating scheme visit www.findourplace.com



URN
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Our small print

Certificates are intended for guidance purposes only. Ratings are based upon the national Building for Life standard and determined in accordance with information submitted by the developer to the local planning authority. Ratings are based on the information submitted as part of the approved planning application. An 'A+' or 'A' rated development may, but will not necessarily qualify for a Building for Life award. Building for Life awards are only awarded once the development is fully completed. The Building for Life partners are the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and the Home Builders Federation. Whilst ourplace rating certificates issued by an accredited Building for Life Assessor, ratings are not endorsed by the Building for Life partners. Accredited Building for Life Assessors are subject to annual audits to ensure that their ratings are consistent and objective. Neither the Council nor the Building for Life partners will accept any liability for developments that fail to meet the required standard post completion. Any enquiries relating to a certificate should be directed to the ISSUING council, not CABE.

© www.nwlcs.gov.uk Version 2, May 2010.

Rating system	How this development is rated	Compare this development against the regional and national ratings	
		Regional *	National *
A+ 'Very good'		3%	5%
A 'Good'		6%	13%
<small>Schemes above this line meet the national standard for well designed homes and neighbourhoods</small>			
B 'Average'		40%	53%
C 'Poor'		51%	29%

* Source: Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (2007) Housing Audit, Assessing the design quality of new housing in the East Midlands, West Midlands and the South West. www.cabe.org.uk

Have you got what it takes to create great places?



Good design needs good design teams. We suggest developers determine whether they have access to the right skills (either in-house or externally) to help them create the well designed places we expect¹.

Developers will also need to ensure that they provide their design teams with the freedom to create great places, inspired by and responsive to the site and its context.

We strongly recommend that developers use talented urban designers², architects, landscape architects and inspired highways engineers who are committed to creating places that lift people's spirits, are physically and psychologically accessible to everyone and promise to stand the test of time.

Applicants are encouraged to submit their own Building for Life assessment as part of any Design and Access Statement, providing robust evidence for each of the criteria they consider their scheme to meet.

Further guidance and best practice examples can be found on our website.

1. Capacity Check is a method of appraising urban design skills within your organisation and/or your external consultants. See www.capacitycheck.co.uk

2. We recommend that you use Recognised Practitioners in Urban Design. Recognised Practitioner status is awarded by the Urban Design Group. See www.udg.org.uk



We've designed our brand and associated marketing material to appeal to a broad range of home buyers and express the Building for Life criteria in a way that is easier for home buyers to relate to their own lifestyle aspirations. Our current range of lifestyle images reflect a range of the Building for Life criteria from each of the four section headings: a. Environment and Community b. Character c. Streets, Parking and Pedestrianisation d. Design and Construction. As the scheme expands additional lifestyle images will be added to extend criteria coverage.



“It’s important that we create homes that offer generous spaces for the fun things in life, such as baking cakes with the kids”

James Wilson
Managing Director, Davidsons
ourplace™ Ambassador

A new way to market the places you’re creating

All rated developments will receive a complimentary certificate to display in their Sales Office from the local Building for Life assessor. To find out which authorities participate in ourplace™ visit www.findourplace.com.

If you receive an ‘A+’ or ‘A’ rating ourplace™ will invite you to maximise the marketing opportunities available, by purchasing a licence agreement from us.

By opting to maximise the marketing opportunities available you will be able to:

- Use the ourplace™ logo on marketing materials, from price lists to Property Guide publications.
- Hyperlink your development from the listing on the ourplace™ website.
- Purchase a wide range of branded ourplace™ merchandise - simply place your order and wait for the items to arrive. Selected items can also be customised to accommodate your own logo.
- To access these opportunities simply sign and complete the licensing agreement together with the licence fee. The licence fee is payable based on the number of properties on a given development (charged on market rate sale units only).

There’s no point having an ‘A+’ or ‘A’ rating if your on site Sales Teams don’t know what it means.

Local authorities that participate in the ourplace™ scheme can provide short coaching sessions for Sales Teams to help them understand more about the scheme and the national standards – in turn, helping them to explain the benefits to potential home buyers.

Complimentary coaching sessions are available on request. Guidance is also available at the Home Builder section of the ourplace™ website. Simply go to the ‘Sales Support Centre’.

1. CABE (11.08.09) ‘New homes are too small for everyday life, say residents’ www.cabe.org.uk

2. Licences only apply to a named development.

Our four rating tiers

Number of Building for Life criteria met (/20)	Building for Life band tier	ourplace™ rating tier
16 + 14 - 15 10 - 13 0 - 9	Very good Good Average Poor	A+ A B C

ourplace™ - a challenge or an opportunity? We think you'll find it's both.

ourplace™ can help you differentiate yourselves from your competitors and it can add value to your Corporate Social Responsibility Agenda.

Creating places that are built to last and enhance people's everyday lives is what ourplace™ is all about. To achieve this we need to work together – we hope you'll join us.

Our small print

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ourplace™ seeks to encourage and inspire people to create and expect places that contribute positively to our everyday lives and support our natural, built and social environment.

www.findourplace.com

BUILDING FOR LIFE

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

www.buildingforlife.org



ourplace™ was created and is managed by North West Leicestershire District Council.

www.nwleics.gov.uk