



Home Buyer Edition

A guide to ourplaceTM

Helping you find your ideal place to live

What is ourplace™?

ourplace™ is an innovative new service 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.

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. Our simple and clear ratings certificates¹ 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.

ourplace™ was created and is managed by North West Leicestershire District Council. Find out if your local council is part of the ourplace™ scheme at www.findourplace.com

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

1. The 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, 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 criteria¹ will be awarded either a 'B' or 'C' rating.

The criteria are grouped into four chapters:

- **Environment and Community** considers issues such as whether the development provides (or is a short walk) from local facilities, such as schools, parks, play areas, shops and cafes. It also promotes an accommodation and tenure mix that reflects the needs of the local community.
- **Character** promotes the creation of developments that have a positive sense of identity, rather than the use of standard house types that have not been tailored to the locality - and are therefore more 'anyplace' than 'someplace'.
- **Streets, Parking and Pedestrianisation** encourages the creation of streets as social and play spaces rather than just places for cars to park and drive through.
- **Design and Construction** looks at the design and management of public spaces and the design of individual homes.

The 20 criteria are explained in detail at www.buildingforlife.org or see page 8 for an overview.

Don't forget that to achieve a rating there are many criteria combinations. Therefore it's important that if you're looking for a home that meets certain criteria you review a copy of the 'Building for Life Assessment' for a particular development (see www.findourplace.com for 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. www.cabe.org.uk/publications

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

Finding your ideal place to live

ourplace™ can help you find your ideal place to live. Buying a new home is one of the biggest financial decisions you'll ever make with research suggesting that well designed homes and neighbourhoods are more likely to retain their value and increase in value over time¹

Log onto www.findourplace.com and you'll be able to see the best rated developments. The best rated developments will also feature ourplace™ branding, making it even easier to find your ideal place to live.



1. CABE, (2006) The Value Handbook – Making The Most From Your Buildings and Spaces. www.cabe.org.uk/publications.

Opposite: example of an ourplace™ rating certificate. All local authorities that operate the ourplace™ scheme use the same style of certificate.

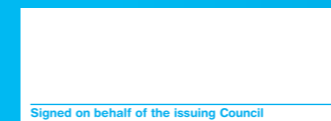
Development Millbrook (Phase 1) Development location Melbourne, Derbyshire

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



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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 are 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.

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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

The Building for Life criteria



Environment and community

01. Does the development provide (or is it close to) community facilities, such as a school, parks, play areas, shops, pubs or cafes?

02. Is there an accommodation mix that reflects the needs and aspirations of the local community?

03. Is there a tenure mix that reflects the needs of the local community?

04. Does the development have easy access to public transport?

05. Does the development have any features that reduce its environmental impact?

Character

06. Is the design specific to the scheme?

07. Does the scheme exploit existing buildings, landscape or topography?

08. Does the scheme feel like a place with distinctive character?

09. Do the buildings and layout make it easy to find your way around?

10. Are streets defined by a well-structured building layout?

Streets, parking & pedestrianisation

11. Does the building layout take priority over the streets and car parking, so that the highways do not dominate?

12. Is the car parking well integrated and situated so it supports the street scene?

13. Are the streets pedestrian, cycle and vehicle friendly?

14. Does the scheme integrate with existing streets, paths and surrounding development?

15. Are public spaces and pedestrian routes overlooked and do they feel safe?

Design and construction

16. Is public space well designed and does it have suitable management arrangements in place?

17. Do the buildings exhibit architectural quality?

18. Do internal spaces and layout allow for adaptation, conversion or extension?

19. Has the scheme made use of advances in construction or technology that enhance its performance, quality and attractiveness?

20. Do buildings or spaces outperform statutory minima, such as building regulations?



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

More photos courtesy of @ourplace. Check out the stock, Leicestershire. www.davidsonsgroup.co.uk Photography: www.marionhollis.com



Don't forget to look out for ourplace™ branding on new developments. You'll be able to easily identify 'A+' and 'A' rated developments, such as this 'A+' rated development in Melbourne, Derbyshire by Davidsons.

Our four rating tiers

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



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.

To find out more visit
www.findourplace.com

**BUILDING
FOR LIFE**

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



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www.nwleics.gov.uk

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