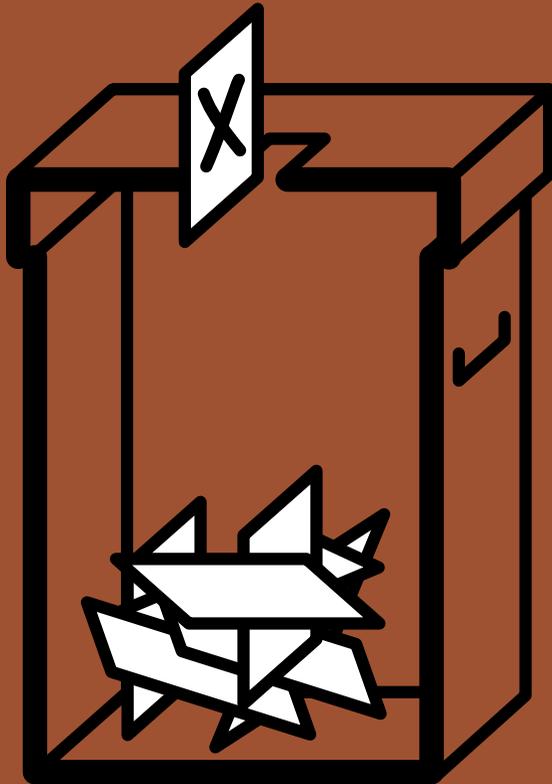


# RIBA



Royal Institute  
of British Architects

## **A manifesto for architecture** 21 actions for a better Britain





## Time to deliver on design

There are votes in architecture. It governs the quality and safety of our hospitals, schools and neighbourhoods. It expresses our values as a society. And it helps drive Britain's economy: in 2004 the construction sector was worth over £100 billion and employed 2.1 million people.

Among 21 actions for designing a better Britain, the RIBA proposes:

- Making Government funding conditional upon good design quality
- Introducing stamp duty relief on the first sale of sustainable homes
- Using the development of retail or leisure facilities to fund improved public transport to surrounding towns and villages
- Investing in a planning system where planners are valued and equipped with a sound understanding of design

Architecture can raise our spirits and enhance our experiences. But that's not all. In schools, hospitals and offices, good design generates long-term value by improving outcomes, reducing running costs and anticipating future changes in use, technology and demand.

Good architecture improves everyone's quality of life. It makes homes more energy-efficient and more adaptable to their owners' changing needs. Intelligent design can provide "extended schools" which offer a wide range of services to the community. It is an essential element in giving communities a sense of belonging and pride in their neighbourhood.

Politicians have begun to understand the need to place design at the heart of services, but the call to act is urgent. Our message for the Election is simple. It's time to deliver on better public services. It's time to deliver on sustainable communities. It's time to deliver on design.

**George Ferguson**  
President 2003–2005

**Jack Pringle**  
President 2005–2007

# Better neighbourhoods: designing for sustainability

- **Introduce stamp duty relief on the first sale of sustainable homes.** Stimulate consumer demand for sustainable communities and environmentally friendlier housing.
- **Equalise VAT to the lower rate on all forms of construction** to encourage regeneration, discourage unnecessary sprawl and protect the historic environment. Make the VAT rate on the re-use and refurbishment of existing buildings the same as for new buildings.
- **Use the 2007 council tax valuation review to offer discounts for energy efficiency or waste reduction, including incentives for private sector landlords.** Householder incentives can encourage investment in homes that are more energy-efficient or generate less waste.
- **Use the development of publicly-owned land to pioneer sustainable design and construction techniques, together with mixed tenure.** As a major landowner, Government has a unique opportunity to lead the development of sustainable communities.
- **Make the planning system sympathetic to domestic renewable energy generation.** The planning system should encourage people to run their homes with minimum impact on the environment.
- **Ensure disclosure of energy consumption in all new buildings.** A requirement to display energy labels – due to be introduced for buildings open to the public from 2006 – should apply to all new projects.
- **Make every school a demonstration project for sustainability.** Include at least one low- or zero-energy section in all new or refurbished schools.



Above: Abode, Harlow, Proctor  
Matthews ©Fusion

Right: Slateford Green, Edinburgh,  
Hackland & Dore ©John Reich



The RIBA is committed to the efficient use of energy and resources to counter the threat of climate change and to help sustainable living. We do this through education, research, campaigns and professional development.

## Valuing communities: designing for people

- Use the development of retail or leisure facilities to fund improved public transport to surrounding towns and villages. Enable the viability of smaller settlements.
- Create railway and bus stations that are more welcoming, more convenient, safer and better integrated with their surroundings. The quality of our transport infrastructure sends a message about how we value people and public transport, and poor facilities are unpleasant for visitors and commuters alike.
- Ensure effective user involvement in all publicly-funded development. Building users can contribute a great deal to design – whether as patients, pupils, passengers, staff, management or visitors.
- Remove obstacles to home working by implementing a package of tax incentives for people running small businesses from home. Home working expands economic activity, reduces unnecessary journeys and, by keeping neighbourhoods alive during the day, can combat crime and antisocial behaviour.
- Ensure that all public projects allocate 1% of the construction cost to the integration of art with design and encourage private developers to follow suit. Combining architecture with art improves people's experience of buildings and landscape, creates a stronger sense of place and brings cultural and commercial benefits.



Above: Pulross Centre, Brixton – Penoyre and Prasad LLP ©Marcus Peel

Left: Cowgate Under 5s Centre, Edinburgh – Allan Murray Architects ©Keith Hunter



The RIBA is placing an ever greater emphasis on the public realm – high-quality public spaces that show people are valued, create safer communities and discourage antisocial behaviour.

# Planning ahead: designing for efficiency

- Invest in a planning system where planners are valued and equipped with a sound understanding of design. Our planning system suffers from a lack of resources, low morale and self-confidence – this must be remedied.
- Appoint city architects with sufficient authority to be effective champions of good design and a resource for advice and information. Appoint design champions in regional assemblies, regional development agencies and local authority cabinets duly empowered to give a clear lead and insist upon the importance of good design.
- Devise simpler procedures for small scale planning applications, and examine delegating planning paperwork for all straightforward cases to approved planning consultants. We need to reduce unnecessary burdens on an already overstretched planning system by streamlining processes wherever possible.



Above: Davygate, York, Panter Hudspith Architects. Photo ©Chris Henderson

Right: Great Northern Square, Manchester, Leslie Jones ©Aidan O'Rourke



The RIBA is breaking down barriers between the built environment professions. We are encouraging our members to work ever more closely with all others involved in the planning, design, construction and maintenance of sustainable communities.

# Building the foundations: designing for society

- **Make Government funding conditional upon good design quality.** Long-term value, for which good design is a pre-requisite, must be the primary consideration in public procurement, and the tools exist to assess design quality.
- **Require public bodies to seek high-quality design and planning alongside best value when selling public land or buildings** by amending the Local Government Act 1972. The sale of public land or buildings should be a catalyst for intelligent development and local regeneration.
- **Ensure that public clients have access to design advisors throughout the process on all new build and refurbishment projects.** Clients often need help.
- **Work with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to integrate teaching about the built environment into the National Curriculum.** It is a great educational resource for a range of subjects such as maths, science, geography, history and citizenship.
- **Introduce architecture and the built environment into the post-16 curriculum.** A better built environment needs a better-informed public.
- **Ensure efficient co-ordination of Government involvement in planning, architecture and construction.** Getting the best out of the built environment for public benefit requires strong, joined-up leadership by Whitehall.

Right: John Cabot City Technology College, Bristol, Feilden Clegg Bradley ©Simon Doling

The RIBA is committed to strong educational outreach and excellence in architectural education. We will work towards the joint education of built environment professionals to achieve a better-integrated construction industry.



The Royal Institute of British Architects has been promoting architecture since 1837. The 30,000-strong professional institute is committed to serving the public interest through good design. Our mission statement is simple: to advance architecture by demonstrating benefit to society and promoting excellence in the profession.

Our manifesto is the result of a broad consultation process within the Royal Institute of British Architects, in association with:

- Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland
- Royal Society of Architects in Wales
- Royal Society of Ulster Architects

We are extremely grateful to many organisations for their advice and assistance during the consultation process, including:

- Be (Collaborating for the Built Environment)
- Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment
- Construction Industry Council
- CITB-Construction Skills
- Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety (Northern Ireland) Health Estates
- Design Commission for Wales
- Institution of Civil Engineers
- Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
- Royal Town Planning Institute
- School Works
- The Peabody Trust
- Town and Country Planning Association
- UNISON
- Urban Design Alliance

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