

## FOREWORD

Over the next 20 years Southampton expects to see considerable growth in the number of new homes built in the city. This will require higher densities of housing in areas well served by public transport and making best use of previously developed land and conversions of existing buildings. We will also need to ensure that more affordable housing and more of the right type of housing is provided that will meet the needs of all sectors of the community.

Higher density housing at an acceptable level will only be achieved if sufficient attention is given to details of quality and design. We particularly need to ensure that adequate consideration is given to the local context and new development positively contributes to enhancing local character and creating a sense of place.

The *Residential Design Guide – making better places for living* provides detailed design guidance that will help transform the city and its neighbourhoods by setting out key design principles for the development of new homes and the spaces that surround them, creating an environment of quality that respects and enhances local character.

The launch of this document is timely as in October 2005 the City Council, Swaythling Housing Society and Persimmon Homes were jointly awarded the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and the Home Builders Federation's Building for Life - Gold Standard award for the Chapel housing development in recognition of the high quality of design the scheme achieves. This award is considered for schemes that successfully meet 16 or more of the 20 questions set out in the Building for Life Standard checklist which provides a valuable tool for assessing the quality of new housing schemes and as such has been incorporated in this guidance.

We are very proud of this achievement and believe that this scheme represents a significant milestone as a flagship for promoting the benefits of good housing design in the city. The *Residential Design Guide* will ensure that this new impetus extends city-wide and delivers a new legacy for the city, enabling the creation and development of sustainable urban communities that promote pride through design quality and that improves the quality of life for all of our citizens.



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