

The Royal Institute of British Architects has been promoting architecture since 1834. 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.

For further information, contact RIBA Public Affairs on 020 7307 3728

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Cover: Pupils of Archbishop Michael Ramsay Technology College working on the DfES Building Schools for the Future secondary school design exemplar project, 2003 © Penoyre and Prasad LLP

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A Manifesto for Architecture Mid term report



Delivering on design?

In 2005 we published *A Manifesto for Architecture*, challenging politicians with 21 actions for designing a better Britain. To mark the Parliamentary halfway point and the start of a new administration in Downing Street, this document looks at progress so far and sets some new challenges for the Government.

When we published *A Manifesto for Architecture* we said that there are votes in architecture. That's still true – good architecture means good schools and hospitals, and attractive and safe neighbourhoods. Architecture expresses our values as a society and helps drive the economy.

We've seen a lot of good progress since 2005. Many of our proposals have been adopted not only by the Government but also other parties. But while some amazing buildings have been built since then, we're still worried that much of the record investment in public services is being wasted on badly designed schools and hospitals. So as well as presenting an agenda for the Government, we're also setting challenges for the other parties to take up and keep up the pressure.

It's a blueprint for Brown – and perhaps even a checklist for Cameron.

Jack Pringle
President 2005–2007

Sunand Prasad
President 2007–2009



Above: © PA photos
Left: 30 St Mary Axe, London, Foster + Partners © Grant Smith/VIEW

Valuing the environment

Since 2005 a remarkable consensus has emerged about the scale of the environmental challenges facing the planet. Decision-makers now realise that climate change cannot be tackled without addressing buildings – which are among the main contributors to global warming.



Valuing the environment

We asked for:

- **Stamp duty relief on the first sale of sustainable homes.** The 2007 Budget abolished stamp duty for zero carbon homes costing up to £500,000 with reductions for more expensive homes.
- **Council tax discounts for energy efficiency or waste reduction.** The Government has proposed legislation to allow local authorities to offer incentives for waste reduction and recycling, and some councils now offer council tax discounts to householders who invest in energy efficiency measures.
- **The use of sustainable design and construction techniques when developing publicly-owned land.** Homes built by registered social landlords and English Partnerships will have to reach Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, while the Government's Zero Carbon Challenge is pioneering zero- and near-zero carbon homes.
- **A planning system that is more sympathetic to domestic renewable generation.** The Government has promised that, in most cases, planning permission to install microgeneration equipment will not be required by householders. Agricultural and commercial uses may soon follow suit.
- **Disclosure of energy consumption in all new buildings.** Public buildings over 1000m² must display an energy rating certificate from April 2008, and the Government is consulting on extending this requirement to other buildings.

- **Sustainable schools.** The Government is investing an additional £110 million until 2010 to introduce high energy performance standards for new schools. The Government's five proposed 'eco-towns' will also include zero-carbon schools.

We also say that:

- **Tackling emissions from new buildings can only play a small role in meeting the climate change challenge.** A comprehensive framework of grants and fiscal incentives will be needed to encourage householders, landlords and businesses to improve the energy performance of existing buildings.
- **The Code for Sustainable Homes must be made mandatory for all new homes, and similar codes should be introduced for other building types.**
- **Achieving zero-carbon homes is getting easier but is still tricky.** Until zero-carbon technology becomes more widely available, stamp duty reductions should be offered for near-zero carbon homes.
- **Let's not beat around the bush: all new schools should be zero carbon – and we don't just mean by offsetting.**

The RIBA is developing a set of practical tools to enable designers and builders to meet the needs of increasingly climate-conscious clients, as well as greener planning policies and building regulations.



Above: Jubilee Wharf, Penryn, ZEDfactory © zedfactory.com
Right: Accordia, Cambridge, Feilden Clegg Bradley
© Countryside Properties



Above: Heart of Hounslow Centre for Health, Hounslow, Penoyre and Prasad LLP © Dennis Gilbert/VIEW
 Right: Scottish Storytelling Centre, Edinburgh, Malcolm Fraser Architects © Malcolm Fraser Architects

Valuing people

We asked for:

- Retail or leisure developments to be used to lever funds for improved public transport to surrounding towns and villages. The Government's plans for a Planning Gain Supplement are designed to improve infrastructure investment, but may threaten the viability of many developments and should be abandoned.
- Effective user involvement in all publicly-funded development. This is now standard practice in health and education projects.

How about:

- Accepting that everyone should be entitled to a well-designed home. Because many people living in social and affordable housing have no choice about the quality of the homes they live in, we believe that all developments containing affordable or social housing should be assessed by a local design review panel.
- Instead of introducing a Planning Gain Supplement, Section 106 agreements should be reformed. Revenue should be used to encourage social inclusion and economic activity in rural areas – such as by expanding broadband coverage or protecting the rural post office network.



The RIBA is using its members' expertise to give advice to central and local government on how to promote the very best in urban design and place-making, and has successfully lobbied Government to build design principles into planning guidance.

Valuing places

We asked for:

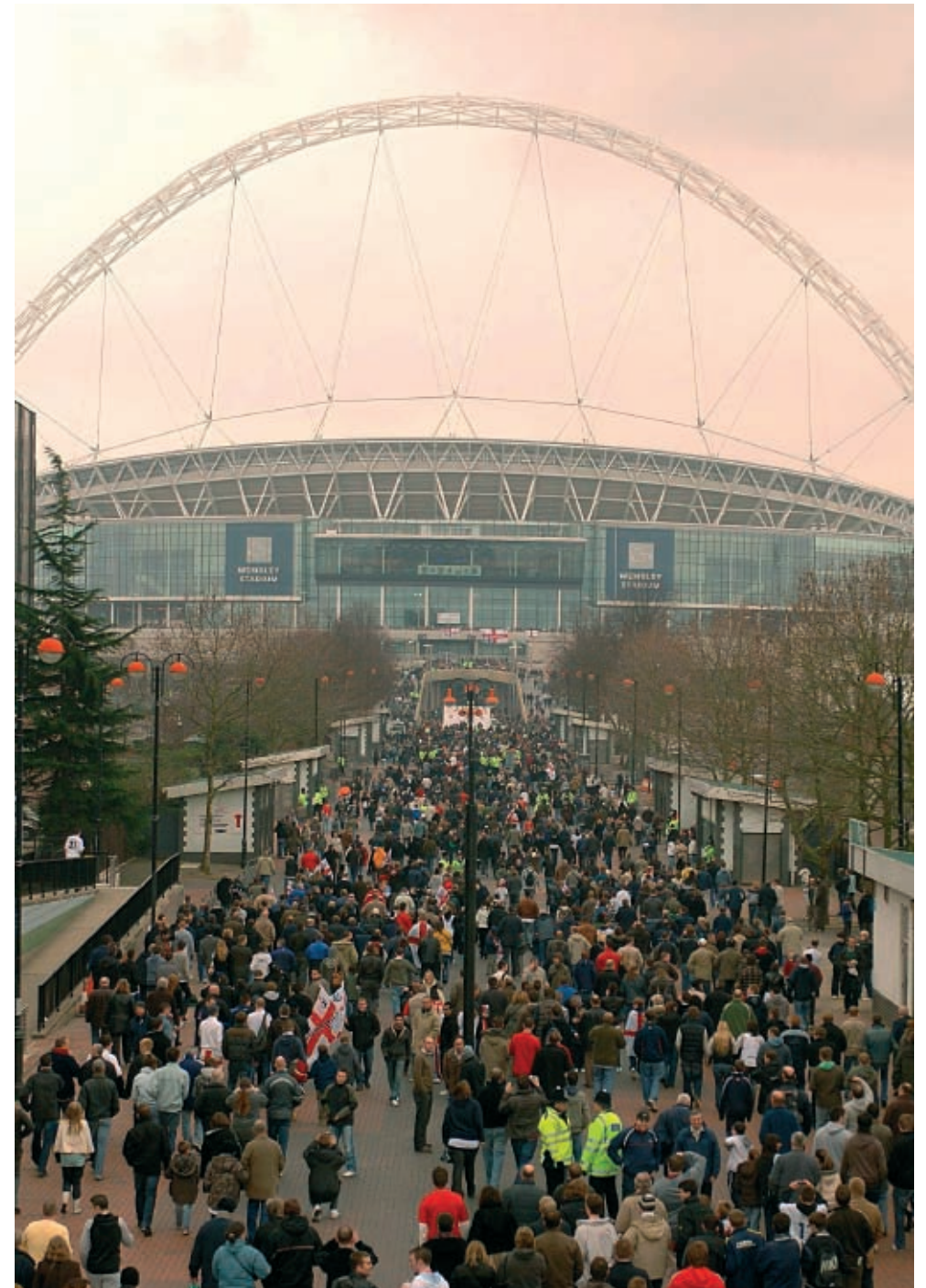
- A planning system that values planners and equips them with a sound understanding of design. The Government's Planning White Paper promises to raise the status of planners within local authorities, and looks to raise performance standards among planners.
- Simpler planning procedures for small scale planning applications. The Government's Planning White Paper proposes exemptions for minor developments from planning permission where there is no or low impact on the immediate area.
- Properly empowered city architects and design champions to be appointed in regional assemblies, regional development agencies and local authority cabinets. Around 65% of local authorities have design champions, and the Government needs to do more to ensure that more people with real clout are available to give a lead on the importance of good design.

More can be done, such as:

- Establishing the systematic use of local design review panels by planning authorities. Planners should be encouraged to call on architects and other experts to give advice on planning applications.
- Properly entrenching design into the planning system. Otherwise deregulation will simply mean that poor decisions will be made more quickly.



RIBA members participate alongside other experts in local design review panels all around the country. By enabling constructive dialogue between developers, designers and planners, design review panels encourage high design standards and sound decision-making.



Above: Wembley Stadium, London, Foster + Partners © PA Photos
Left: Grey Street, Newcastle, Gillespies © Stephen McLaren



Above: Chirton Dene, North Shields, Southern Green Partnership © RUDI
 Right: Mancat Harpurhey Campus, Manchester, Walker Simpson Architects © Walker Simpson Architects

Valuing society

We asked for:

- **Government funding to be conditional on design quality.** The Office of Government Commerce has devised a system of checks – including a test of whole-life value – for the procurement of public buildings. This must be widely followed.
- **Public building clients to have access to design advisors.** RIBA Client Design Advisors are being used in the Building Schools for the Future programme.
- **The integration of the built environment into the National Curriculum and the inclusion of architecture in the post-16 curriculum.** A Foundation GNVQ in Construction and the Built Environment has been introduced, but more could be done.

Let's build on that:

- **Badly designed public buildings are a disgrace and a waste of public money. No more tax for tat – design needs to be at the heart of every procurement decision.**
- **The Prime Minister has said the UK economy must outperform its competitors in science and education, infrastructure and the environment. Building architecture into the National Curriculum would help meet this aim.**
- **If the Government wants every school to offer more extended learning by 2010, it must increase its support for schemes such as CABE's How Places Work programme, which gives children the chance to learn from inspiring buildings and public spaces.**



The RIBA's Client Design Advisor scheme provides independent, expert advisors to guide public sector clients through the often complex public procurement process.

We also asked for:

- VAT to be equalised on all forms of construction.
- Public bodies to seek high quality design and planning when selling public land or buildings.
- Safer, more welcoming and convenient railway and bus stations that are integrated with their surroundings.
- Efficient co-ordination of Government involvement in planning, architecture and construction.

As someone once said, 'a lot done, a lot more to be done'.



Above: View across the 2012 Olympics site from the Saint Etienne film 'What Have You Done Today, Mervyn Day?' © Paul Kelly
Left: The Green Wing by Duffy, original photo © PA Photos

