



Delivering good design through core strategies

**Commission for Architecture  
and the Built Environment**

**The government's advisor  
on architecture, urban design  
and public space**

# Overview



- CABE
- LDF workshops
- Key findings
- Key messages
- Other projects



# About CABE

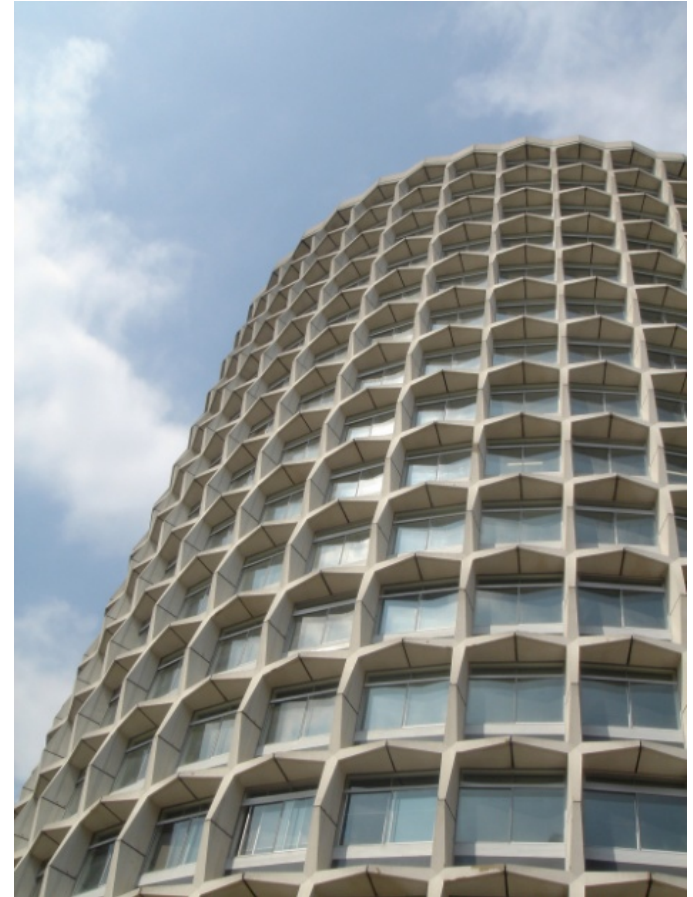


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- Established 1999, replaced Royal Fine Arts Commission
  - A statutory body and non statutory consultee, except for IPC schemes and London tall buildings
  - *‘The promotion of education and high standards in, and understanding and appreciation of architecture, and the design, management and maintenance of the built environment’* Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005
  - CABE Planning Advisory Committee – 30 members from public and private sector chaired by Commissioner Joyce Bridges

# CABE involvement in LDFs



- CABE design review consulted on LDF documents
- CLG wanted CABE input to LDFs
- Need for a process outside Design Review
- Pilot a new mechanism for reviewing LDF





## CABE LDF WORKSHOP

- Informal
- Chatham house rules
- Panel of expert planners from CABE PAC
- Face to face discussion
- ➔ Note sent of main comments
- LPA can bring whole team
- Capture learning

# The workshop process



- 3 core strategies per workshop – 1 ½ hours each
- CABE advisor meets LPA before workshop
- Planners present to the panel



# Workshops with local planning authorities from

- Every region
  - Urban and rural
  - District and Unitary
  - Large and small
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- Different issues and challenges
  - So far 35 workshops seeing 98 LPAs



# Why the core strategy is so important

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- The core strategy is the KEY document for the WHOLE of the local authority
- Embedding a design ethos is about the approach taken
- Spatial planning means having a strategy, not a list of policies
- Its about understanding the place, saying what is wanted & saying it clearly

# Planning for Places – the key messages



- Tell the story
- Set the agenda
- Say it clearly

# Tell the story – why its important to design



- Focus the strategy on **quality of place** rather than policies or housing numbers

- **Identify** important features, opportunities & areas of change

- Help scope different **options**

- Recognise needs of **communities**

- Make it **relevant**

- lead to a strong and **locally specific** vision



## Panel member quotes

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- *“you have the passion and the knowledge in your head, we’ve heard it today, and now we need to see it written”*
- *In terms of the core strategy being used for making planning decisions, its absolutely critical that the story weaves its way through with local variations”*
- *“Focus should be on places, not themes and housing numbers”*

# Set the agenda – why its important to design

- Show LA **leadership**
- **Identify** what needs to be done, and when
- **Positive** message about change
- Explain the **benefits** of the strategy to existing and future communities
- Increase **understanding** of the goal and direction
- **Clear message** to developers about high quality design



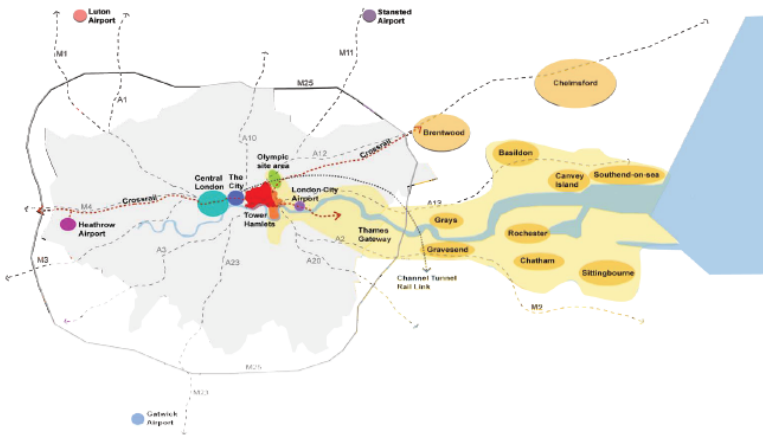
## Panel member quotes

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- *“Unless you’ve got some clearer direction in here, you won’t get what you want.”*
- *“I didn’t get a feel of the scale of change in the scenarios – in terms of the amount that’s going to happen”*
- *So unless your core strategy makes it clear what you want for Christmas, a developer won’t know what to do with their scheme”*

# Say it clearly – why its important to design



- Helps everyone **understand**, **engage** and **contribute** to achieving the vision
- Clear **commitment** through document to design quality
- **Clarity** about how issues will be addressed
- Increase local **community** engagement
- Reduces the **length**

## Panel member quotes

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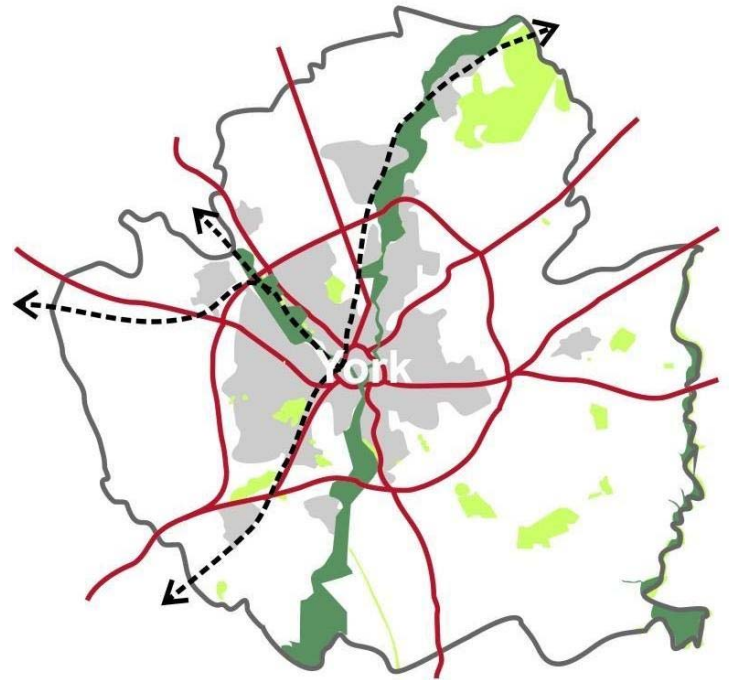
- *“Excite people through the communication methods used in the consultation”*
- *“Transformational economic hub’? It’s a town!”*
- *“Find the best buildings and places and put some pictures of them. Things that have always been there to show that the place has got a bit of history”*

## Local authority example - York



- Change in approach - the city's green belt wedges seen as an opportunity

*“The comments and discussions opened up new ideas and directions. An excellent event both in terms of its organisation and content. A very positive way of influencing the LDF process “*

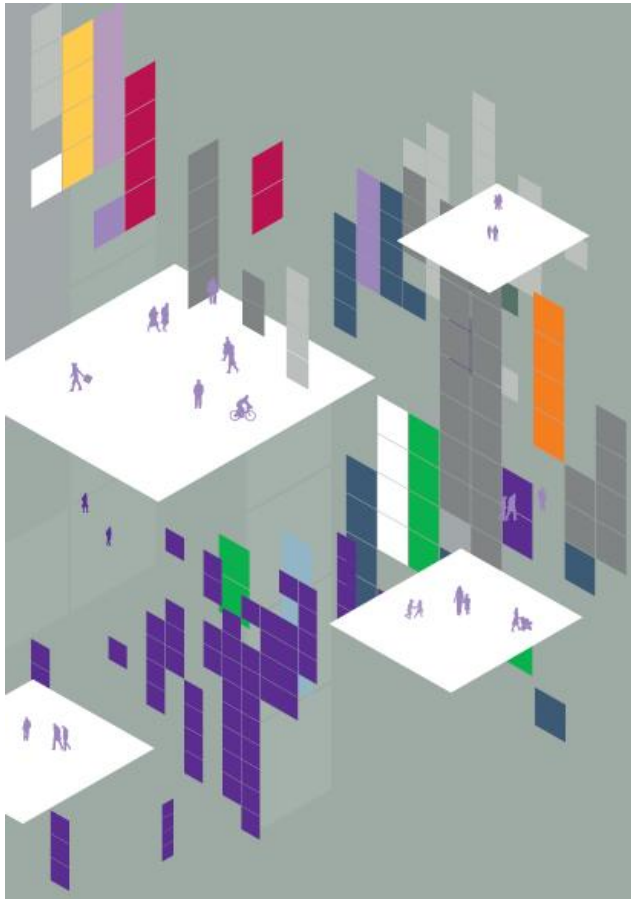


## Local authority example - Dover



- *“Overall we found the experience at CABE to be extremely positive, constructive and it was particularly useful to have a ‘critical friend’ appraising and questioning some of the statements and our approach in the LDF.”*

# The benefits for the local planning authority



- Access to direct, specific, helpful and relevant advice
- An informal, independent view
- Opportunity to test ideas and approaches
- **Unique opportunity to have an open discussion about spatial planning with a group of highly skilled experts**

# The benefits for CABE



- **Robust process to review local planning documents**
- Effective way of helping local authorities with a key task
- Scale of learning results in evidence gathering to develop key messages & feedback to CLG, key partners (PINS, PAS, RTPI) and other LPAs

# Planners talking to planners

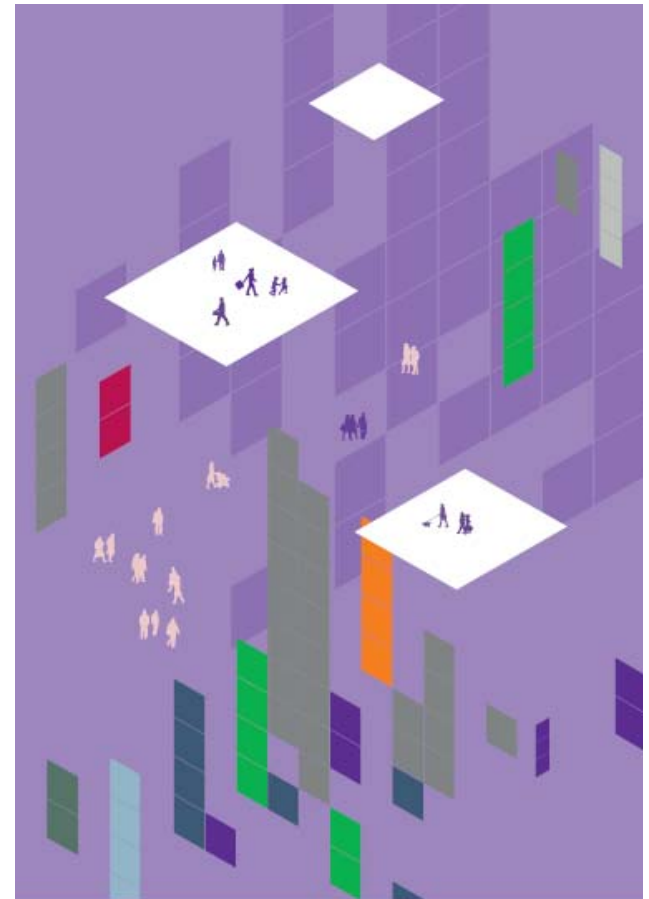


- Planners have great knowledge and skill about their places, sometimes bogged down in process
- Planners needing support and positive help
- Many young planners benefiting from experience of panel
- Planning develops through these types of conversations
- Many say this is a unique experience, that gives them a morale boost



# The workshop process today – looking to the future

- Short dvd explaining the key messages
- Workshops continuing in 10-11
- Decentralisation and localism bill November 2010
- Neighbourhood plans – how to achieve good design in them



# CABE recent work



- Councillor's guide

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/news/leave-your-mark>

- How can councillors improve design quality
- How to decide if proposals are any good



and



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- Large scale urban design

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/getting-the-big-picture-right>

- Design review annual report

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/helping-local-people-choose-good-design>

- **Community green** – using local spaces to tackle inequality and improve health

<http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/community-green>



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