

# Networks of quality accommodation and support, to provide homes for those without.



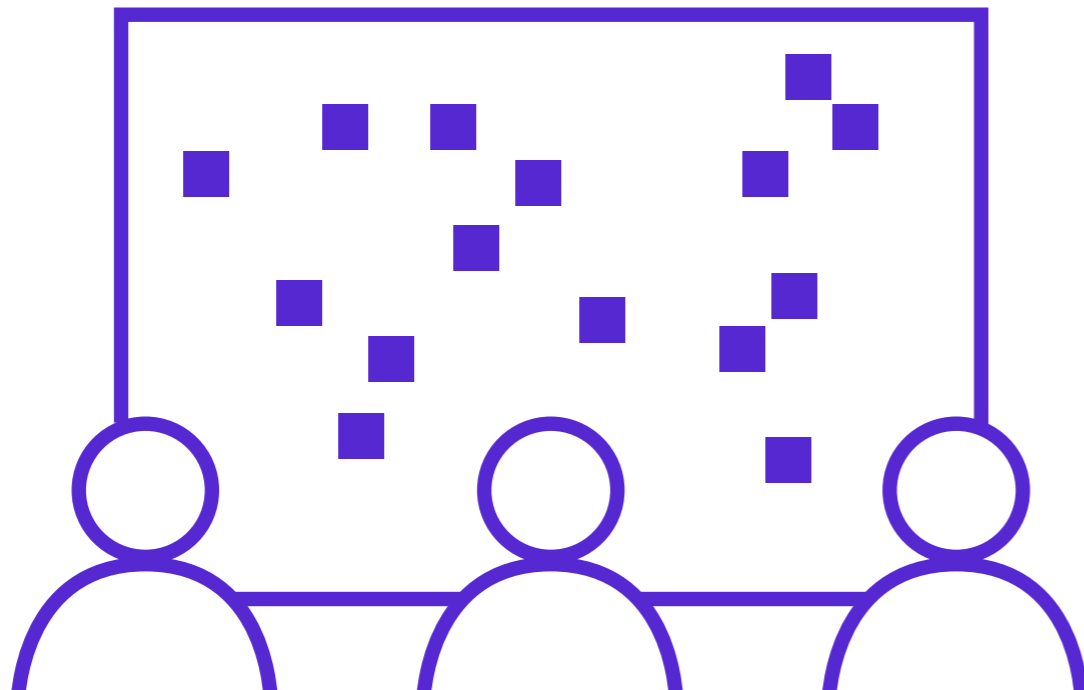
## Networks of quality accommodation and support

At the beginning of June 2020, Design Council with the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) held a virtual workshop to consider how unused or vacant property that has become available due to the COVID-19 crisis might be repurposed into high quality supported accommodation which can both reduce rough sleeping and prevent longer term homelessness.

This report presents Design Council's principles and recommendations for local areas working in partnership to support homelessness prevention in a with-COVID-19 world.

The workshop and this report has been supported and funded by JRF.

The COVID crisis has prompted many people to consider those more vulnerable than themselves. Can we use this new energy and sense of community to foster new networks of quality support as well as accommodation?



During the session we presented research on the potential opportunities for move-on accommodation; from immediately available options to those that require more time, such as new build developments. We discussed the opportunities for accommodation that have emerged as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, and the barriers and threats to the various approaches. Importantly, how can the quality of the housing?

What makes a certain type of accommodation or home good quality? Quality housing means many things, but crucially it is having access to appropriate support. This is especially the case with move-on accommodation. Accommodation without appropriate support is not appropriate accommodation.

In July 2020, MHCLG announced the Next Steps Accommodation Programme, providing funding to local authorities and their partners to safeguard and enhance housing provision and support to ensure everyone has a home.

We envisage this report being used in conjunction with this funding programme, promoting co-production and providing a set of principles and recommendations and inspiring ideas to ensure property brought forward is of high quality, appropriately supported and remains sustainable.

You can see the full Miro board with research, testimonials and discussions [here](#).

# Workshop delegates

- |                  |                     |                |                     |                 |
|------------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Cat Drew         | Vanessa Hemmings    | Malou Lindholm | Sarah How           | Karen Ng        |
| Roland Karthaus  | Laura Furness       | Rick Hughes    | Tasia Thompson      | Rich Grahame    |
| Darren Baxter    | Morgan Bestwick     | Neil Munslow   | Ben Smithies        | Sharanya Ramesh |
| Tom Wynne-Morgan | Benjamin Rick       | Declan Flynn   | Sarah Laing Gibbens | Steffan Evans   |
| Jessie Johnson   | Tatevik Sargsyan    | Jennie Coombes | Priya Tethi         | Lucy Warin      |
| Elli Thomas      | Sarah Rowe          | Adeola Palmer  | Stuart Morgan       | Martin Hancock  |
| Heather Macey    | Rachel Casey        | Taylor Gill    | Alastair Parvin     | Michael Brookes |
| Glenn Arradon    | Benedetta Locatelli | Khalid Awan    | Suzannah Young      | Euan Mills      |
| Libby Eastley    | Helen Mathie        | Deborah Hay    | James Rowlands      | Andy Redfearn   |
| Deborah Garvie   | Olutoye Babalola    | Nicole Speake  | Amir Rizwan         | David Ford      |
| Chris Hildrey    | Ric Frankland       | Damien Reilly  | Charles O'Neil      | Karen Shaw      |
| Neelam Sundar    | Lucie Anderton      | James Cox      | Donna Mcfayden      | Martin Burrows  |
| Susan Taylor     | Indy Johar          | Mike Anderson  |                     | Nicole Speake   |



**Assess as being homeless - £7,289**

**Outcomes of homelessness application**

**FACTORS OF HOMELESSNESS**

**Push factors:**

- Being evicted (the rent arrears or for behaviour) or leaving temporary lodgers when they close.
- Being asked to leave after relationship breakdown (partner or family).
- Leaving prison after a sentence or being held on remand.
- Leaving accommodation because it didn't meet needs (e.g. no cooker, no pet) or was poor quality.
- Leaving because of noise or anti-social behaviour, or excessive rules and regulations.
- Leaving informal accommodation (sofa-surfing) because of being asked to leave or feeling like a burden.
- Leaving accommodation because of isolation and loneliness.
- Leaving criminal victimisation (e.g. abuse or tenancy hijack).

**Causal factors:**

- Being evicted (the rent arrears or for behaviour) or leaving temporary lodgers when they close.
- Lacking a social network with resources to help either having exhausted that option, or not having a family or friends who can help.
- Trauma and unmet health needs, and lack of support with these.
- Difficulties managing a tenancy (and lack of support with this, and not knowing legal rights).
- Inability to secure a new tenancy (no deposit, landlords won't take you, council won't house you).

**Success factors - or escaping homelessness:**

- Opportunity to begin to look out, engage with things that were beyond the day-to-day existence. Increasing self-worth, gaining confidence, finding structure, escaping boredom and gaining a sense of belonging.

**Being evicted to a prison activity:**

- Opportunity to begin to look out, engage with things that were beyond the day-to-day existence. Increasing self-worth, gaining confidence, finding structure, escaping boredom and gaining a sense of belonging.

**Helping lock factors:**

- A realisation that things had become out of control and they "knew their" and looked for a way out.

**Self support partners and activities:**

- That will go the extra mile, stick with people, utilise their personal experiences, challenges, encourage, believe in, value and care.

**Peer perspectives and client involvement:**

- A means of developing oneself but also to fulfil a sense of duty to give back.

**Recognising the importance of social networks:**

- The support of friends and/or family and creating new or rebuilding old social networks.

**Learning to focus with the homeless experience:**

- Recognising some skills - such as an increased resilience/flexibility - gained through homelessness. Building on these as a starting point for moving on.

**References:**

- Homelessness: A Guide for Practitioners (2018) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/748888/homelessness-a-guide-for-practitioners.pdf)
- Homelessness: A Guide for Practitioners (2018) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/748888/homelessness-a-guide-for-practitioners.pdf)
- Homelessness: A Guide for Practitioners (2018) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/748888/homelessness-a-guide-for-practitioners.pdf)
- Homelessness: A Guide for Practitioners (2018) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/748888/homelessness-a-guide-for-practitioners.pdf)

**Videos:**

- Homelessness: A Guide for Practitioners (2018) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/748888/homelessness-a-guide-for-practitioners.pdf)
- Homelessness: A Guide for Practitioners (2018) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/748888/homelessness-a-guide-for-practitioners.pdf)
- Homelessness: A Guide for Practitioners (2018) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/748888/homelessness-a-guide-for-practitioners.pdf)
- Homelessness: A Guide for Practitioners (2018) (https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\_data/file/748888/homelessness-a-guide-for-practitioners.pdf)

**Quotes and testimonials**

**Personas**

**Support**

**Use this space to note down what you understand to be the needs of those experiencing homelessness and the barriers they face to having these needs met.**

**At risk / emerging homeless**

**Pool quality / insecure temporary accommodation**

**Everyone in / rough sleepers**

**Potential 'move-on' accommodation opportunities**

**Permanent affordable housing acquisition**

**Barriers and threats**

## Our vision

The COVID-19 crisis has shown that with energy, necessity and resources, it is possible to accelerate the provision of accommodation for all. In the long-term, this is a future where everyone has a home, welcomed by neighbours, with different levels of support. In the short-term, this means a network of different types of accommodation, spread across a place, with people supported by a network of services, connected to their peers and neighbours.

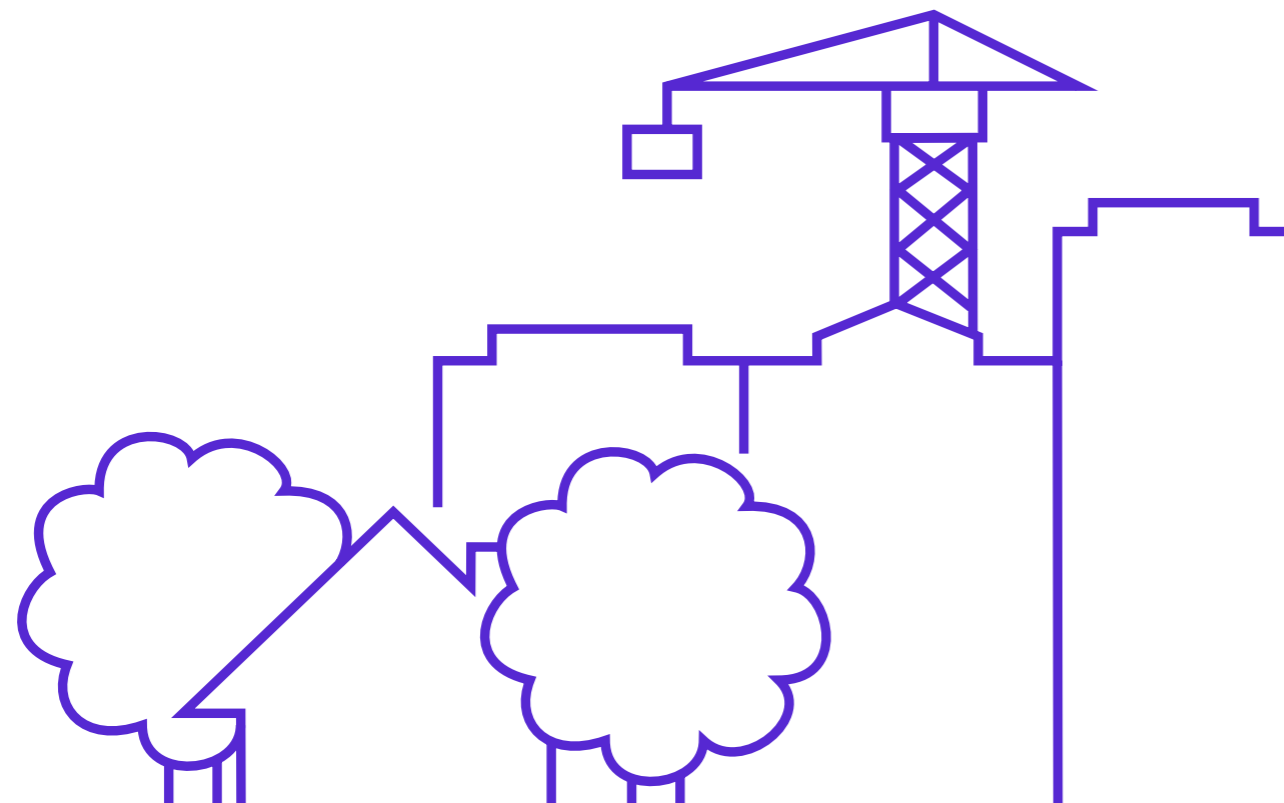
We recognise that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work. Places and people are different. People have a range of experiences and needs requiring varying levels of support.

In this world, an alternative starting point is that everyone has a home, but just a different type of home and with varying levels of support. We have a common humanity and although we have wildly different experiences, based on deep inequality, we are on a shared spectrum, just at different places along it. We use the collective sense of concern that has come from the 'with-COVID-19' world to create a greater understanding of others' experiences. We design for transition and flexibility, recognising that the amount of support someone might need is likely

to change. We design for reciprocity, knowing that we all can provide support as well as receive it. And we design for community; we need to design interventions and services to support communities and/or landlords to welcome people who are financially vulnerable or with mental health challenges, and support those in need of intense support.

Local area homelessness teams will have found themselves working with new partners, unusual suspects who have and want to provide additional resources to prevent homelessness. Local authorities can take inspiration from this guide and principles to welcome in these new partners and work together determine who can be part of this local system.

Here, we set out our ideas for a network of quality accommodation, an ecosystem of services that supports people living across a place, and some principles that might guide how partners work together. These are not instructive, but suggestive. They are not detailed, but instead aim to provoke local conversations about what a wider variety of stakeholders could do together.



## Principles

Supporting our vision is a set of principles. These principles can be used by existing or new partners as they work together to deliver accommodation for all. They are deliberately provocative to get partners to really engage and think about how they work from a different starting point. They are intended to spark innovation.

### A goal of permanence

Always consider the long term. Start from the position of providing continuous (although not always the same) accommodation and create a familiarity across accommodation options and services so that transitions between them are seamless.

Build in longevity through alignment with broader communal factors included in the Local Plan.

### Abundance of options

Use opportunities to reset homelessness strategies where they are too rigid. Foster the creation, presentation and take-up of positive options for clients rather than choices which might seem limiting.

Increase flexibility by removing conditionality where possible and maintaining multiple channels for access e.g. digital, phone and face-to-face.

### Connect, mix and welcome in

Partner accommodation with the right mix of support services without making access conditional on either.

Design for cohesion and reduced stigma by orienting the mindset of the wider community to welcome homeless clients.

Integrate existing mainstream services or accommodation options. Look out for new service partners - including third and business sectors - and bring in their resources and energy.

### Mutual support

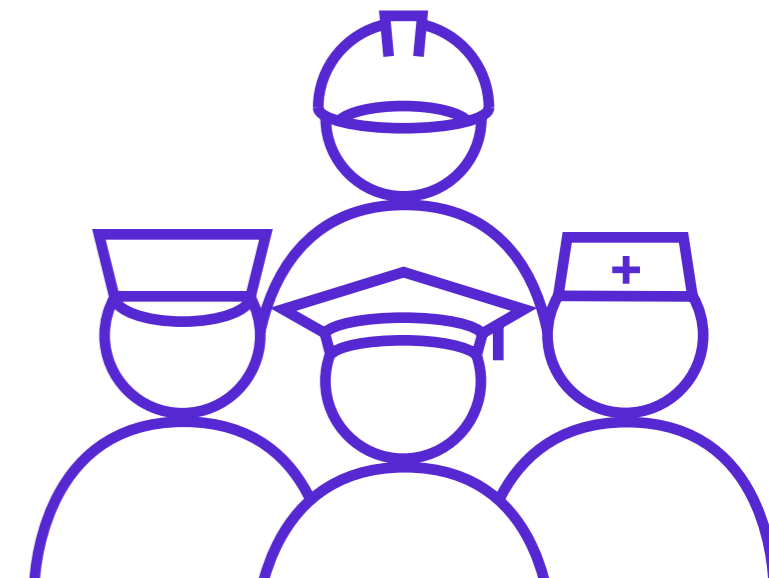
Ensure that independent living services, places and spaces are co-designed and chosen with clients.

Encourage a sense of ownership and by enabling clients to support others and to give back, building skills and finding independence.

### Design for constant change

Build in flexibility and support to cater for individual needs and the potential for these to change over time.

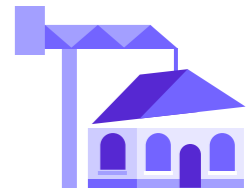
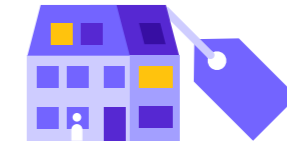
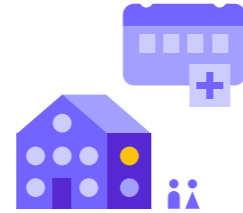
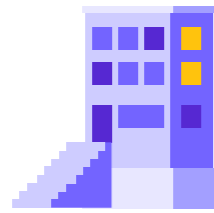
Consider how digital tools can enable tiers within service support or accommodation options that enable everyone to easily understand what is right for them. Design for difference and deliver for commonality.



# Creating new networks of quality accommodation for people, connected to quality support.

Available now

Available later



## Accommodation potential

### Reconfigure emergency accommodation

Make changes to short term shelters to enable longer term living.

### Maintain or increase private rented sector (PRS) tenancies or utilise social housing voids

Work with landlords to retain existing tenancies and increase uptake of empty homes.

### Utilise empty habitable spaces e.g. above shops

Identify habitable but unused spaces that can be easily be adapted.

### Change use of short stay accommodation

Change spec of short stay or communal living (e.g. student accommodation or hotels) to cater for more independent, longer term living.

### Adapt unused retail, office or civic spaces

Utilise redundant spaces through internal reconfiguration.

### Buy up unsold homes or repurpose existing

Increase current housing stock through purchase of new builds that remain unsold or through estate regeneration.

### Meanwhile housing

Create temporary housing, using modern methods of construction, on sites that will remain empty for significant amounts of time.

## To ensure quality

Reduce the number of spaces to ensure that the accommodation complies with COVID-19 safety advice

Ensure there is safe and secure storage for everyone

Access to outside space that is safe and close to, or part of, accommodation

Adapt the interior space to offer sleeping privacy and dignity for each individual

Consider the mix of clients to ensure everyone's safety

Ensure the location is suitable for the client group and extended facilities timetable

Provide additional management staff with appropriate training to support clients during the day as well as night.

Provide tenancy guarantee to assure landlords

Utilise Discretionary Housing Payment - increasing uptake of tenancies through initial funds for deposits

Produce clear and concise standards around accommodation that are regularly reviewed and enforced

Agree code of conduct and standards with landlords

Offer private landlord liaison - working with landlords on an ongoing basis to prevent evictions

Provide landlord advice for new landlords around what to do and how to effectively manage.

Undertake light refurbishment ensures the space feels homely

Ensure spaces are safe and secure - separate entrance from connected premises

Allow space for external support services to operate, such as back to work training etc.

Identify / repurpose shared public spaces such as cafes for social space

Ensure that any outreach wraparound support is in place from the start and throughout tenancy

Create an easy route for potential new landlords to find out how to apply

Provide complete management to take the worry away from landlords

Partner with services that provide tenancy support.

Undertake light refurbishment ensures the space feels homely

Ensure internal reconfiguration gives access to communal spaces and facilities appropriate to the client groups

Ensure space for external support services, such as back to work training, are able to operate effectively

Ensure space and amenity standards such as access to outside space are carefully considered

Ensure existing building management has appropriate training to understand needs of the client groups.

Consider location in relation to access to work opportunities and services. Make arrangements to mitigate where there are issues

Ensure high quality residential amenity and space standards

Work with Local Planning Authority to secure planning permissions

Make sure building management and amenities provision are considered.

Work with housing partners to identify opportunities to integrate into larger schemes

Explore how community spaces can be made accessible and useful to the target group

Review strategic delivery for opportunities and explore financial and planning implications at a high level

Provide appropriate on-site building management (depending on location and client group)

Ensure that estate management is delivered in phase with building development.

Consider sites close to amenities and facilities

Carefully consider and plan for time/cost required for works to get site ready

Form strategic partnerships with modern methods of construction (MMC) manufacturers and contractors

Ensure communal spaces and amenities are designed in

Ensure the site management is fully integrated with surrounding area or consider additional site specific management.

## Services

Peer support networks  
Mainstream plus  
Health and well-being

Peer support networks  
Home-making  
Mainstream plus  
Neighbourhood welcome

Refocused outreach  
Home-making  
Mainstream plus  
Skills improvement  
Neighbourhood welcome

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Home-making

Neighbourhood welcome

## Services types

These are typologies of an ecosystem of existing, adapted or new services that might be required to support a network of accommodation across a place. All services are encouraged to work together. Strong services work better as part of a strong system.

### Refocused outreach

Utilising existing outreach networks to maintain contact across a range of accommodation options.

- Idea: Outreach undertaking home visits and liaising with landlords.
- Service like: Age UK check-in calls.

### Peer support networks

Using a range connected service, or access to digital tools, to ensure that people can maintain contact and get support from family and peers, particularly if moving out of area

- Idea: Zoom support group.
- Services like: Groundswell, Facebook groups.

### Home-making

Partner with organisations and clients to make spaces and places feel like home, both internally and externally

- Idea: Partnership with local DIY store and charity shops to provide up-cycling home service.
- Services like: The Decorators, Bright Sparks.

### Mainstream plus

Adapting regular mainstream services to ensure that they are fully inclusive, maintaining access to specialists if necessary.

- Idea: Neighbourhood GP service which has skype connection to specialist service (but welcomes everyone in to neighbourhood).
- Service like: Supermarket Key Worker hours.

### Skills improvement

Create more flexible ways to up-skill clients, that take their current location and space into consideration e.g. in-reach training.

- Idea: Schemes where young offenders build the accommodation they then live in.
- Service like: Timpsons, Construction Youth Trust.

### Health and well-being

Enable co-ordination across a broad range of mental and physical health services (including food, exercise, mindfulness etc.) and utilise existing logistics networks or digital tools to meet health needs in a more distributed way.

- Idea: Trauma service for everyone in the community to deal with wellbeing issues post COVID-19, through inclusive and co-ordinated group exercise.
- Services like: Calm, Our Parks.

### Neighbourhood welcome

Ensure that clients new to the community are welcomed and settled in as best as possible. Offer training and support to those who want to help others settle in.

- Idea: Neighbourhood buddy for when a client moves into a local area.
- Service like: COVID-19 mutual aid groups and Local Welcome.

## What's next?

Over the next month, local areas will be applying to the Government's **Next Steps Accommodation Programme fund** to create new types of move-on accommodation. The principles we've set out here can be used by local areas, together with new partners committed to provide homes for all.

We are pleased that the funding is to cover both capital and support services, and recommend the following:

### Collaboration and co-production

Councils work with local designers (such as architects, services designers and social innovators) to design accommodation and services in a way that is human-centred, and considers how homeless people can support each other, and how communities can welcome them to new neighbourhoods.

### Social investment

Funders consider how they can use social investment to create new innovative models of housing which might contain a higher level of risk than the local council would usually accept.

### Innovative and appropriate

Architects think about how they can use construction methods which provide affordable, healthy homes, and link up with initiatives including: the government-backed **Home of 2030 initiative** (run by BRE, Design Council, RIBA and MOBIE), Architects Aware, National Housing

Federation, Chartered Institute of Housing, National Federation of ALMOs and Association of Retained Council Housing's Homes at the Heart campaign.

### Available for all

Government consider policies around conditionality and universality so that everyone can access a home and essential services in their local area.

### Systems of support

Community groups continue to use the energy and goodwill seen through COVID-19 to carry on reaching out to those who are most financially vulnerable, supporting them through challenging times so they don't lose their homes.

Businesses such as DIY shops, restaurants and gyms consider how they could provide offers to groups who are financially vulnerable (as many have done during COVID-19).





**Design Council**  
**Eagle House**  
**167 City Road**  
**London EC1V 1AW**



**[info@designcouncil.org.uk](mailto:info@designcouncil.org.uk)**



**020 7420 5200**



**[designcouncil.org.uk](http://designcouncil.org.uk)**