

25 January 2012

The Chief Planning Officer
Local Planning Authorities in England

Dear Colleague

Housing Design Awards 2012

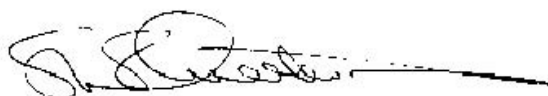
You may already be aware that this year's Housing Design Awards opened for entries last week.

As set out in *Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England* (Nov 2011), the Government attaches great importance to improving the quality of homes and neighbourhoods. It is essential that new homes meet the needs and aspirations of communities and consumers and that the industry responds proactively to this.

In my role as Chief Planner I have always championed good design and I strongly believe that it plays a crucial role in encouraging communities to embrace development and should be an integral consideration early in the planning process. The Housing Design Awards have long promoted the significant role planning and communities play in the quality of new homes built in each locality and aim to showcase innovation, showing how communities, councils, planners, architects, landscape architects, surveyors and developers have worked together to deliver successful schemes.

It is important that we celebrate the very best that has been built in your locality. I am therefore writing to you to encourage you to put forward examples of new homes which have contributed positively to their communities and become exemplars of good design.

Please take time to consider what you would promote as the best local initiative and encourage the development teams to enter this year's awards online at www.hdawards.org by 5pm on Thursday 1 March 2012.



STEVE QUARTERMAIN
Chief Planner