

space and quality of materials and detailing. Space standards are at Parker Morris levels. Special requirements, such as for families of ten, are taken into account and the basic unit is adapted to suit.

To achieve quality within the limited budget, SEH looked carefully at every detail, so that the available money could be spent on sound reliable components like high-quality joinery, brickwork and landscape. Materials are of an unusual quality for social housing: windows and panelling are hardwood (from well-managed sustainable sources), purpose-designed and fabricated in close collaboration with the manufacturer. Roofs are stainless steel, which makes use of recycled steel and will last almost indefinitely without maintenance.

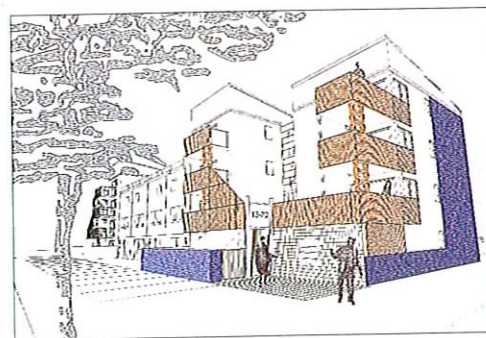
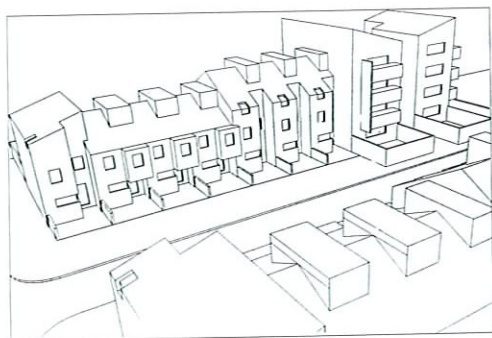
The green approach doesn't stop at materials. Passive stack ventilation is used to all homes, with a Willan Passivent system to avoid extract fans. Insulation levels are high (ground U-value of 0.32, external walls 0.35, roofs 0.20) and all timber is from renewable sources, fabricated using non-polluting processes. The HAT is working with SEH to develop a small ecological park within the development – a new approach to urban open space. The dwellings have also been designed in accordance with the principles of lifetime homes, anticipating how they might be adapted – for changing family size, inserting wheelchair lifts etc – and allowing for this in design and construction.

As is usual with housing, the client wanted to use a design & build contract. But on the advice of SEH it was agreed that, rather than being novated (with loyalty transferring to the contractor),



they would be appointed as employer's agent, with their drawings forming part of the employer's requirements. Since the drawings went well beyond Stage E and included 1:5 drawings of all major details, this limits the scope for the contractor to subvert the design in search of savings.

**Top** Street view with a three-storey terrace and flanking corner blocks of flats. House modules comprise a series of basic elements deployed to suggest a hierarchy: red brick on lateral streets (relating to the context) and blue on cross streets; large-scale recesses in the brickwork to form frames; modular timber window/door panels within the frames; and stainless steel roofs throughout (for low maintenance and to provide continuity). House modules are combined in terraces, which vary in response to adjacent buildings or street scale – ie less panelling and simpler elevations near existing dwellings and more complexity where streets are of greater scale. **Above** Three- and two-storey terrace under construction. **Left** Prefabricated timber modules were designed with Blair Joinery.



**Left** Within the masterplan, four younger practices have designed blocks of flats. Clockwise from top left: Mode 1, Proctor Matthews, Anne Thorne and Timothy Associates.

**Project team**  
 Architect, landscape architect (sites 16-21): Shephard Epstein Hunter; design team: Alain Head (project director), Clare Devine (project associate), Lee Allen, Naveeta Brar, Adam Cornish, John Curran, Denise Devine, James Gregory, Mark Howard, Keyvan Lankarani, Rekha Mistry, John Ongom, Claire Robertson, Graham Ryder, Paul Swann, John Thacker, Richard Tovey; joint masterplanners: Shephard Epstein Hunter, Terence O'Rourke; environmental and structural engineer: Oscar Faber; cost consultant: Dearle & Henderson; client: Stonebridge Housing Action Trust; main contractor: Lovell Partnerships.

**Selected subcontractors and suppliers**  
 Timber infill panels: Blair Joinery; rooflights: Velux; terner stainless steel roofing: Uginox, Eurocom Enterprise; Warnham stock bricks: James & Taylor.