



Building for a Healthy Life

A Design Toolkit for neighbourhoods, streets, homes and public spaces





Can you walk *anywhere*? Would you walk *anywhere*?

Written with Stefan Kruckzkowski and more,
in partnership with Homes England
NHS England and NHS improvement

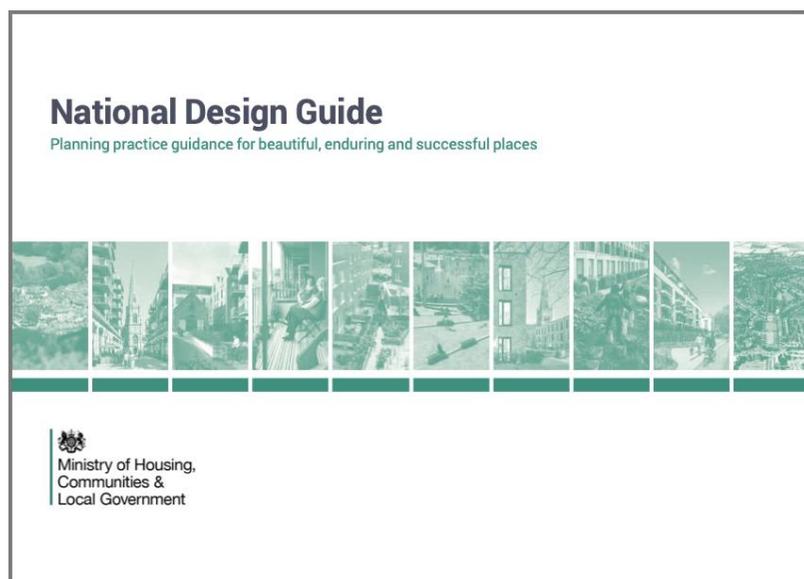


Design Network partners:

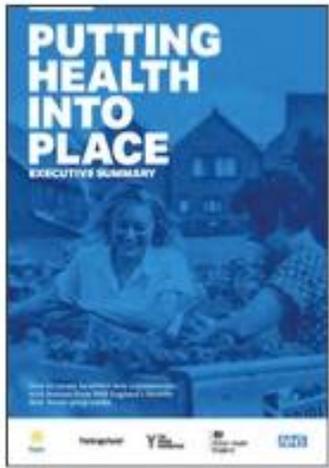


BHL helps you deliver the National Planning Policy Framework and National Design Guide locally

129. Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life⁴⁷. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes, including any recommendations made by design review panels.

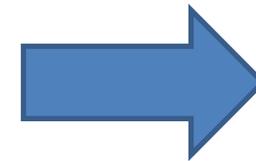


Healthy New Towns Programme



england.nhs.uk/publications/putting-health-into-place

- + Environment Act
- + User feedback
- + High levels of physical inactivity*



**Building
For a
Healthy
Life**

*6 million adults aged 40-60 (more than 2 in 5) don't take a walk of 10 or minutes in any given month. Source: PHE, 2016

NHS has paid to make public realm part of your daily exercise

**BHL greater focus on active travel – walking and cycling.
68% of all journeys are less than 5 miles with the most frequent being 1-3 miles (and these are the only journeys increasing in number). One mile in a car generates ‘a bathful of CO₂’ (Energy Savings Trust way of saying 276g)**

Edge to edge connectivity and connected movement networks are critical to improving people’s health and wellbeing as well as air quality.

Same structure and principles

Stronger emphasis on health and wellbeing

Building for Life 12	Building for a Healthy Life
Integrating into the neighbourhood	Integrated neighbourhoods
Connections	Natural connections
Facilities and services	Walking, cycling and public transport
Public transport	Facilities and services
Meeting local housing requirements	Homes for everyone
Creating a place	Distinctive places
Character	Making the most of what's there
Working with the site and its context	A memorable character
Creating well defined streets and spaces	Well defined streets and spaces
Easy to find your way around	Easy to find your way around
Street and home	Streets for all
Streets for all	Healthy streets
Car parking	Cycle and car parking
Public and private spaces	Green and blue infrastructure
External storage and amenity space	Back of pavement, front of home

Users asked us to offer more guidance



What 'green' looks like

- ✓ Edge to edge connectivity.
- ✓ Respond to pedestrian and cyclist desire lines.
- ✓ Connected street patterns. These work best when they include straight or nearly straight streets to make pedestrian routes as direct as possible.
- ✓ Filtered permeability. A useful technique that designs out 'rat running' and creates a pleasant low traffic environment around people's homes whilst still allowing pedestrian and cycle movement.
- ✓ Continuous streets (with public access) along the edges of a development. Private drives can frustrate pedestrian and cycle movement along the edges of a development.
- ✓ Connecting existing and new habitats; safeguarding existing or creating new movement corridors for nature.
- ✓ Where retained, keeping hedgerows within the public realm, safeguarding their future retention and management.
- ✓ Streets and routes that can be extended in the future.
- ✓ Adoption to site boundaries.



green = go ahead

So BHL highlights more clearly common pitfalls



What 'red' looks like

- ✗ Roads for cars.
- ✗ Failure to adhere to the user hierarchy set out in Manual for Streets.
- ✗ Wide and sweeping corner radii (6m or more).
- ✗ 6m+ wide carriageways.
- ✗ Highways engineering details that make pedestrian and cycle movements more complex and difficult.
- ✗ Street trees conveyed to individual occupiers.
- ✗ Distributor roads with limited frontage access, served by private drives.
- ✗ Painted white line cycle routes on pavements or on carriageways.
- ✗ Speed control measures that rely on significant shifts in street alignment that contribute towards wasting land whilst also creating disorientating places.



red = stop & rethink



Department for
Transport



Manual for Streets



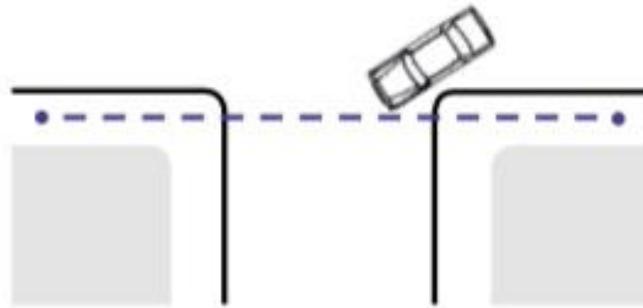
3 out of the 12 considerations directly relate to Manual for Streets

Natural connections

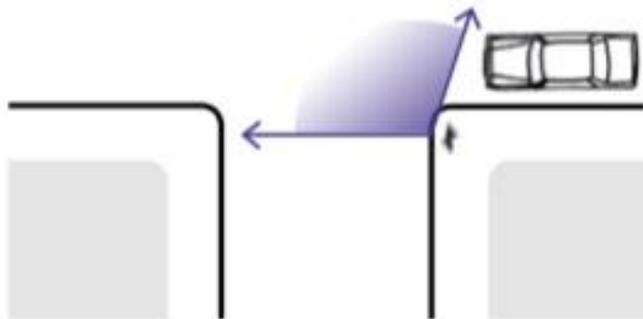
Walking, cycling and public transport

Healthy streets

Small radius (eg. 1 metre)

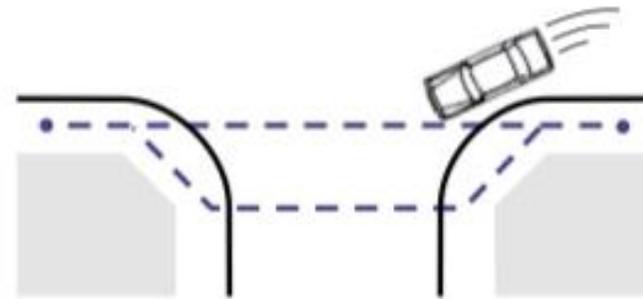


- Pedestrian desire line (---) is maintained.
- Vehicles turn slowly (10 mph – 15 mph).

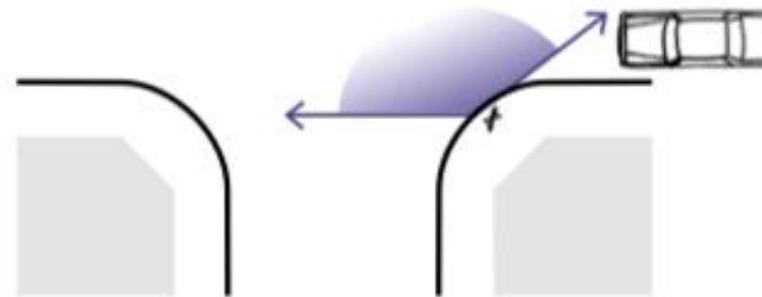


- Pedestrian does not have to look further behind to check for turning vehicles.
- Pedestrian can easily establish priority because vehicles turn slowly.

Large radius (eg. 7 metres)



- Pedestrian desire line deflected.
- Detour required to minimise crossing distance.
- Vehicles turn faster (20 mph – 30 mph).

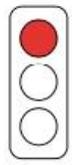


- Pedestrian must look further behind to check for fast turning vehicles.
- Pedestrian cannot normally establish priority against fast turning vehicles.

Figure 6.3 The effects of corner radii on pedestrians.



Tight corner radii (3m or less).



What 'red' looks like



Roads for cars.



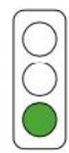
Failure to adhere to the user hierarchy set out in Manual for Streets.



Wide and sweeping corner radii (6m or more).

We need to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over motor vehicles





What 'green' looks like





Frustrated connectivity is widespread



Frustrated connections...



Bus Gate

Cambridge 12°



Restaurants



Hotels



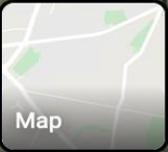
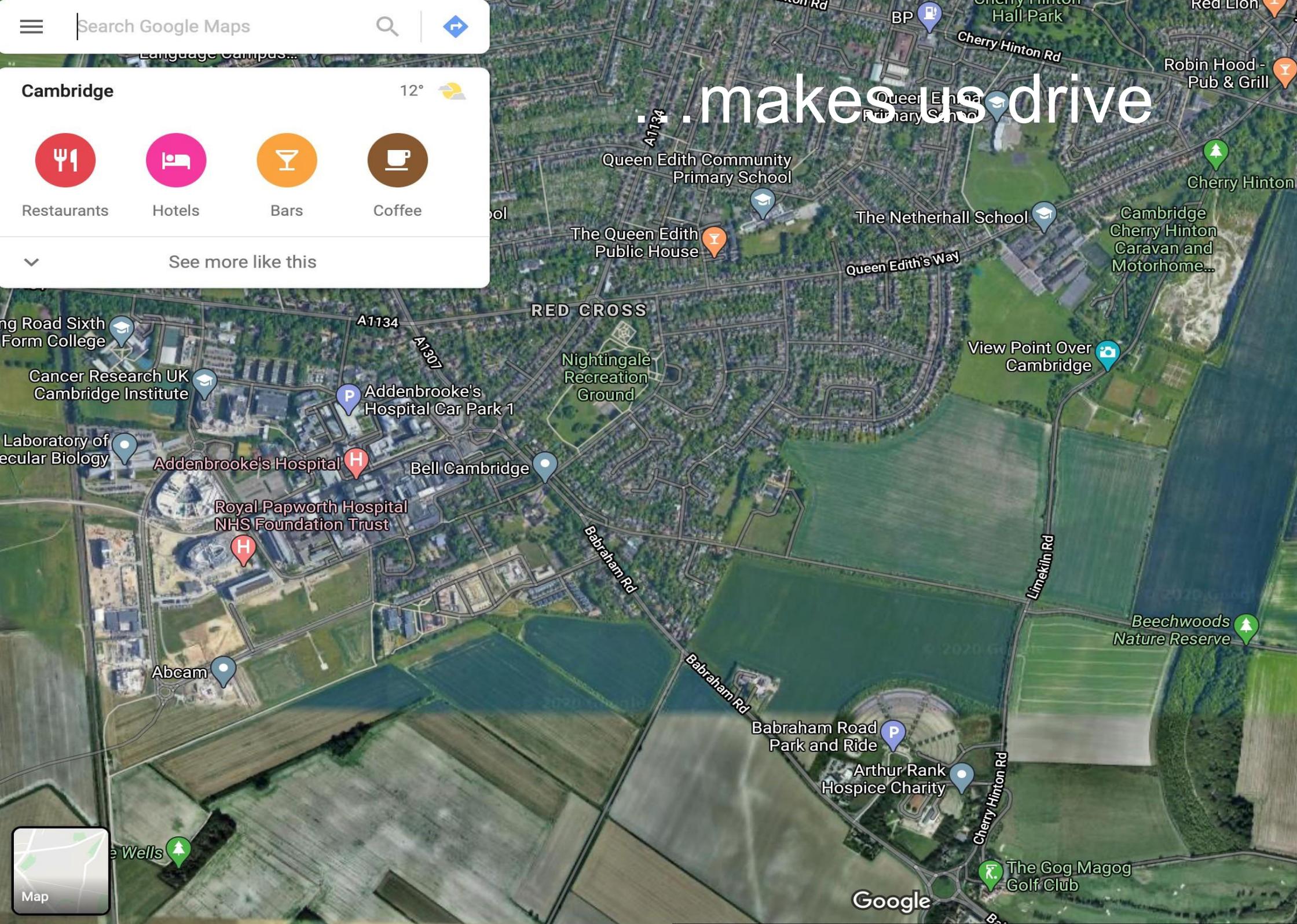
Bars



Coffee

See more like this

...makes us drive



**The design of *streets* (not roads),
and how they *connect*, will determine how
much active travel takes place in a new
neighbourhood and how that contributes to
fitness, sense of well being and air quality**

<https://www.designforhomes.org/project/building-for-life/>

Free to use but please let us know if you are using it
info@designforhomes.org

Look out for **training opportunities** in the Autumn and Winter.