

A new London Vernacular?

In his presentation as part of NLA's Pecha Kucha on housing David Birkbeck of Design for Homes described how he had become aware in recent years of a pattern of housing design which he felt delivered a contemporary London Vernacular. He saw the origins of the LV approach stemming from the Mayor's Housing Design Guide which, although only published in 2010, had been in gestation for some years before. The introduction to the Guide calls for a new vernacular that is not a "singular architectural style, but recognises that the best housing comes from robust guidelines in planning and regulation, together with a deep understanding of particular architectural and social contexts."

Thus Birkbeck described homes that respected the street, were generally built of brick, that reflected their surroundings and brought together the variety of required housing types into a coherent whole.

On this page are a selection of schemes from the Housing London exhibition that reflect a LV approach – some orthogonal and modernist, others with pitched roofs and referential, but all reflecting something of the essential DNA that makes up London.

The NLA Pecha Kucha 'The New Housing Vernacular' was sponsored by Barratt London

1. St. Andrews Phase 3, E3 – Glenn Howells Architects for Barratt London
2. St John's Hill Estate Regeneration, SW11 – Hawkins\Brown for Peabody
3. One Tower Bridge, SE1 – Squire and Partners for Berkeley Homes and LB Southwark
4. Plaistow Hospital, E13 – PCKO for Peabody
5. Kidbrooke Village Phase 1, SW3 – Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands for Berkeley Homes (© Guy Archard)
6. Goresbrook Village, RM9 – Stitch and Mae for Countryside Properties and LB Barking & Dagenham
7. Cambridge and Wells Court, NW6 – Lifschutz Davidson Sandilands* for LB Brent (© visualhouse)
8. Whitechapel, E1 – Niall McLaughlin Architects for Peabody
9. Junction Road, N19 – Weston Williamson for Empyrean Developments



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