

Fir Tree Road

Guildford, Surrey

Rosemary Simmons Memorial Housing Association (now [Crown Simmons Housing](#)) have redeveloped the site of 16 former bed-sits on the Bellfields Estate in Guildford to provide 3 new houses and 14 flats for social rent, with associated parking and communal facilities. The site is an open setting on the edge of the estate, bounded by roads on 3 sides and facing towards a large public open green space with a lake opposite.

The scheme was designed to allow every unit to take full advantage of this setting, with corner windows allowing all units to have views towards the green. Internally each flat has a through kitchen-living-dining space with patios and balconies providing private open space and with views both towards the green and the south-facing communal garden.

The site layout was designed to make a positive response to the edge condition of the estate, with a strong demarcation of public and private spaces created by the continuous building enclosure. The corner conditions, which had been 'dead' spaces between blank gable walls, are treated much more positively as points of entry into the communal parts of the blocks.

All units are designed to Code for Sustainable Homes Level 4 and to Lifetime Homes Standards, including one wheelchair accessible house with an internal lift. The Local Authority requirement for 10% renewable energy provision is met by roof-mounted photo-voltaic panels providing a landlord's electrical supply, with solar-thermal panels supplementing domestic heating and hot water for the houses.

The scheme was constructed using a SIPS (Structural Insulated Panel) system, pre-fabricated off-site. This allowed a reduced on-site construction programme and achieved enhanced fabric performance in terms of U-values and air-tightness standards. Mechanical Ventilation with Heat Recovery (MVHR) was provided to all units.

The building form was fragmented and articulated to adjust to the scale of the surroundings. External materials were selected with sustainability in mind to ensure long-life and low-maintenance, with no requirement for external redecorations. Aluminium-clad timber composite windows provide enhanced U-values and acoustic performance.

Client: Rosemary Simmons Memorial Housing Association (now [Crown](#)



[Simmons Housing](#))

Photography: [Jefferson Smith](#)





