

Types of Adviser

Many building professions have membership or accrediting bodies. If you are not acting on a recommendation, you might want to consult these organisations for advice on local operators, or look out for accreditation marks.

- [AECB](#) The Association for Environmentally Conscious Building is a network of individuals and companies with a common aim of promoting sustainable building. There is a group in Cumbria and one in Lancashire.
- [CIOB](#) The Chartered Institute of Building train and support construction professionals in order to 'promote the science and practice of building and construction for the benefit of society'.
- [NHBC](#) The National House Building Council is a non-profit organisation with the stated purpose 'to give homeowners confidence in the quality of new homes'. They provide inspection services, guidance and training to builders, and are the UK's leading warranty and insurance provider for new homes. Over 10,000 builders and developers are registered with NHBC. You can search a county list, or check if a particular company is registered.
- The [Federation of Master Builders](#) and the [National Federation of Builders](#) both offer searchable lists of traders and contractors.
- [RICS](#) The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors 'promotes and enforces the highest international standards across the built and natural environment' by training and supporting thousands of professional surveyors.
- [RIBA](#) The Royal Institute of British Architects 'aims to support British architects and introduce new people to the world of architecture'. They have a Find an Architect section on their website.
- [RTPI](#) the Royal Town Planning Institute has over 2,000 members in the North West of England and campaigns to 'raise the profile of the profession and generate awareness of the invaluable contribution planners make to building sustainable communities'.

Community Development

To advise on:

- how to generate interest in the community for your project
- how to carry out community consultation exercises
- how to identify need for housing

- the type of legal entity which would be best for the proposed project
- funding and fundraising for your project(s)

Financial Advisers

To advise on:

- raising development finance for community led housing, which may include mortgages, share issues or crowd funding
- financial aspects of business plans
- budgeting and cashflow for your organisation and projects
- assessing the financial accounts of prospective consultants, developers and builders
- financial risks involved

Legal (Community & Housing)

To advise on:

- registering the legal form of your group
- your legal obligations and responsibilities
- legal risks and issues
- tenancy agreements, landlord responsibilities and housing management issues

Legal (Property, Planning & Construction)

To advise on:

- contracts for advisory services
- site acquisition, option agreements and leases
- planning issues
- restrictive covenants, wayleaves and other land issues
- building contracts
- contractual disputes

Technical Co-ordinator

They can help you to develop your project and business plan, and help you to apply for grants. They will advise you on how to manage and structure your project and how to

commission and manage consultants. Their involvement may be just at the start of the project or you may wish them to support you throughout the process.

They can help by advising on:

- how to find a suitable site
- assessing options for sites
- business plans
- viability
- submitting planning applications
- commissioning consultants, writing project briefs and assembling a project team
- managing the project team

Planning

To advise on:

- planning policy, including liaison and negotiation with the local planning authorities
- masterplanning and site layout options
- submission of planning applications
- environmental, heritage and listed building issues in relation to planning
- highways matters in relation to planning
- dealing with planning conditions
- planning appeals

Land & Valuation

To advise on:

- how to find sites
- contractual mechanisms to secure land for development
- site viability
- valuations to support site acquisition and disposal

Architects & Designers

To advise on:

- housing design concepts and layouts for feasibility/viability assessment

- sub-contracting and/or managing specialist design input where required
- plans for planning applications
- full building construction drawings and specifications
- full design services based on RIBA plan of works
- landscape design services

Quantity Surveyor

To advise on:

- outline costs for feasibility/viability assessment
- cost management and risks involved
- procuring builders
- assessing tenders from builders
- building contracts
- quantities of materials
- analysing completed work and assessing payment to contractors

Construction Project Manager

To advise on:

- building works, by overseeing quality of the build and how to deal with any issues arising
- contractor's health and safety responsibilities
- complying with building regulations
- progress of the works and how to deal with any issues arising
- managing relationships with the wider community to resolve issues arising from construction operations

Energy Efficiency and Low-Carbon Design

Hints & tips

Value Added Tax (VAT)

If a company is registered with HMRC to pay VAT then this will be added to their bill. You will be able to claim this back if your organisation is also registered to pay VAT with

HMRC. Advisers do not need to be registered with HMRC if their turnover is less than the required threshold.

It may be possible to reclaim VAT on construction costs. HMRC can advise about this.

Fees

If you engage a consultant on a day rate it is important to be clear about what they are expected to do within the time allotted. Be aware that because of the nature of the work and timescales involved some services are priced as a percentage of the total project cost.

Preparing a specification and securing quotes

You will be expected to show funders that you have achieved value for money to ensure that funds are spent wisely. It is good practice to get prices for the work from more than one supplier, usually three. Set out a brief or specification indicating what services you need, when it is needed by and how the work will be assessed as being finished satisfactorily.

Prepare this and send it out with a request for fixed price quotes, setting a deadline for these to come back. You should not accept any further bids after the deadline. For costing a full design service, a percentage of the cost of the building works may be more appropriate.

You should set out how you will decide which bid you will accept. This may be the lowest price or a combination of both price and quality. You can consider the quality of the bid by asking questions about previous experience and evidence of their commitment to your values through completed projects. You can also ask how they will deal with situations or issues that might arise.

You must score bids you receive based on the scoring method you have set out. This will help you explain your decision should any challenges which may arise.

You may score quality as a higher proportion, but make sure that the highest quality proposal is not more than you can afford to pay, or your funders will allow.

Once you have chosen who you want to work with you will issue a contract. This is based on the tender and sets out what you expect to be done, when you expect it and when you will pay. This protects both parties from misunderstandings and can help resolve disputes. You may want to take legal advice on this.

The [Plan of Work](#) published by the Royal Institute of British Architects sets out what is needed at each stage of the project and is used throughout the development industry. You may find it helpful if you are managing the project yourself.