BEST PRACTICE GUIDES

SECTION 8 EXTERNAL WORKS





BEST PRACTICE GUIDES

Our series of Best Practice Guides will take you through what the Pride in the Job judges look for at each stage of construction and when considering the site manager's overall organisation and management skills.

The Pride in the Job marking sheet used by our judges has 44 marking lines split across 9 sections. The judges will give a score for each line - where there is no work to mark, that line will be left blank and no mark given. A mark of 4 indicates compliance with NHBC Standards and with Building Regulations. A mark of 5 indicates extra attention to detail over and above compliance standards. A mark of 6 would indicate that much of what the judges have seen cannot be improved upon. A mark less than 4 would indicate varying issues relating to workmanship and non-compliance with NHBC's Standards - the greater the issue or number of the same issue. the lower the mark. The final score will be all the marks awarded expressed as a percentage.

These Guides set out what the judges are looking for with clear hints and tips on the sort of practice that will lead to higher marks.

Clearly it is impossible in these short guides to cover every single point of construction - we try here to cover the main issues that are taken into account when considering a mark for each score line.

When looking at the photographs, consider each one in the context of the score line heading – don't be distracted by something else that isn't as good – that will be marked accordingly elsewhere.

SECTION 8 EXTERNAL WORKS

RETAINING WALLS AND FREE-STANDING WALLS EXTERNAL LANDSCAPING

The external features set off a new home. Whatever specification is used, it must be well presented and have a positive effect on the overall aesthetic finish of the new property.



RETAINING WALLS AND FREE-STANDING WALLS



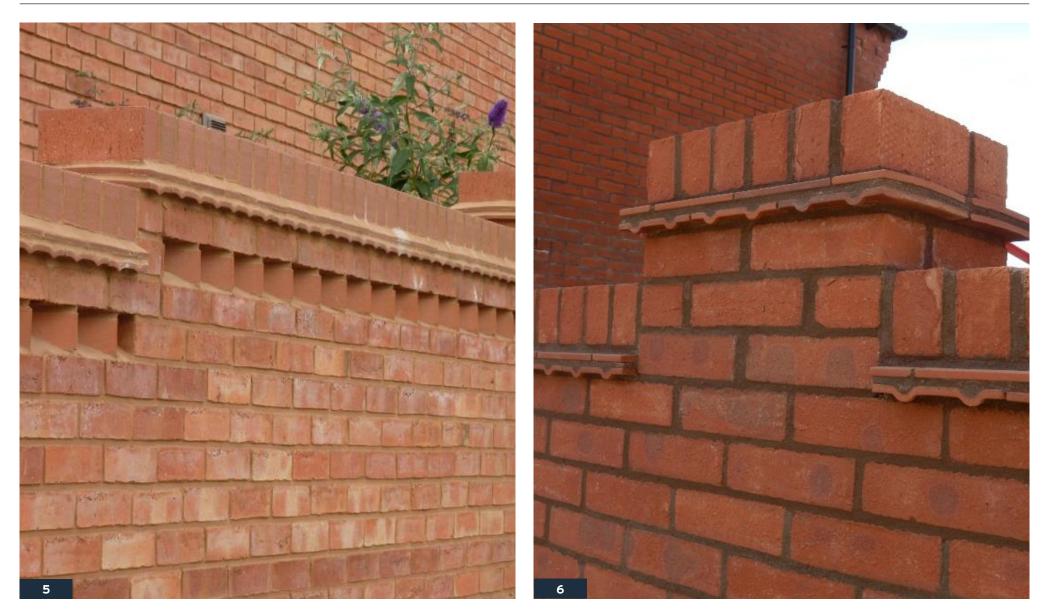
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RETAINING WALLS AND FREE-STANDING WALLS







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RETAINING WALLS AND FREE-STANDING WALLS



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SECTION 8 - EXTERNAL WORKS

RETAINING WALLS AND FREE-STANDING WALLS (INCLUDING BALUSTRADING OR RAILINGS)

The construction of retaining walls must be in accordance with the design including behind wall drainage, weep holes and the type of backfill used.

Freestanding walls must be stable, using the correct masonry and mortar mix, have some form of capping to prevent water saturation and include movement joints where necessary.

For higher marks, the quality and attention to detail of masonry work and wall cappings will be taken into account together with the correct application and neatness of mastic coverings to movement joints.

Care needs to be taken over the coursing and joints in curved masonry walls. Attractive creasing tile or drip detail and neatness and robustness of capping course end bricks will all attract good marks.

Images 1 and 2: Both show good strong construction, well-built and with the requisite drainage and weep holes. Remember that the weepholes should be as low as possible to provide water pressure relief behind the retaining structure - there is no point putting them at the top as all that will do is drain the drive on the high side; not quite the point.

Images 3 and 4: These show good examples of Gabion walls constructed to retain the roads around the natural water course with concrete culvert constructed providing vehicular access to the development; these are a popular choice as they provide very good structural support to the ground and have inherent drainage. They also have the benefit of being able to be planted which can soften the look over time, whilst maintaining the robustness in performance. They do need to be properly constructed with a managed process of being filled, not just with rubble tipped in an uncontrolled manner.

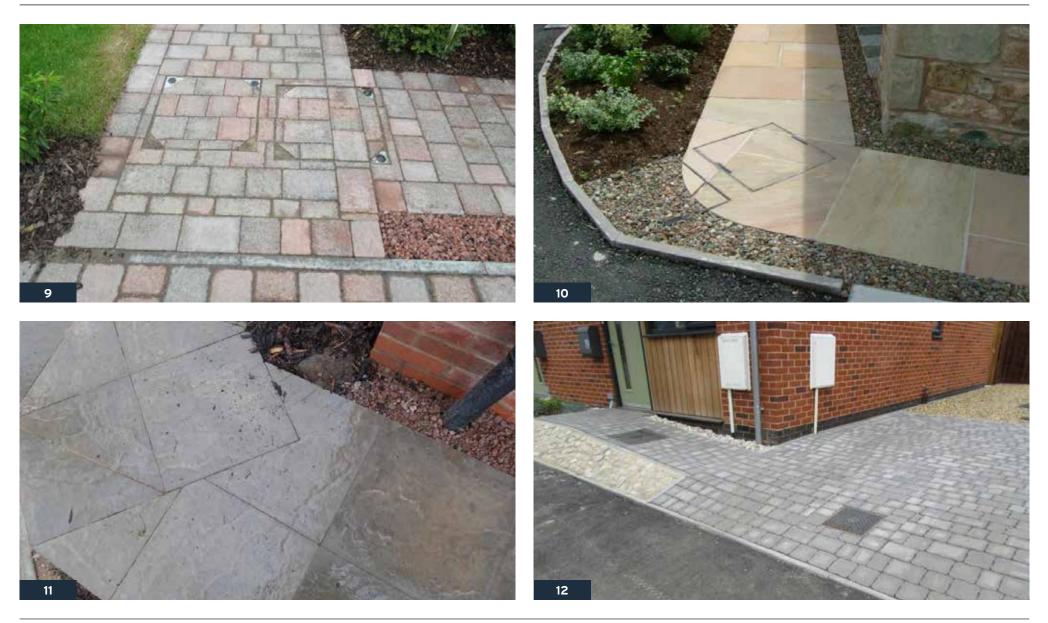
Images 5 and 6: Boundary walls set off a property, so they really do need to show the craftmanship of the mason who is building them. These are two excellent examples, the clean lines really set these off well. A common downfall can be in the freehand work at the top, especially with mortar fillets - one to watch out for.

Images 7 and 8: Both great examples of managing style or level variations. Remember, we're not judging the specification, just how well it's been put together.

There is some lovely work being demonstrated in these images, which if consistent across the site would merit a good 5 or even a 6 if the work could not be improved upon.

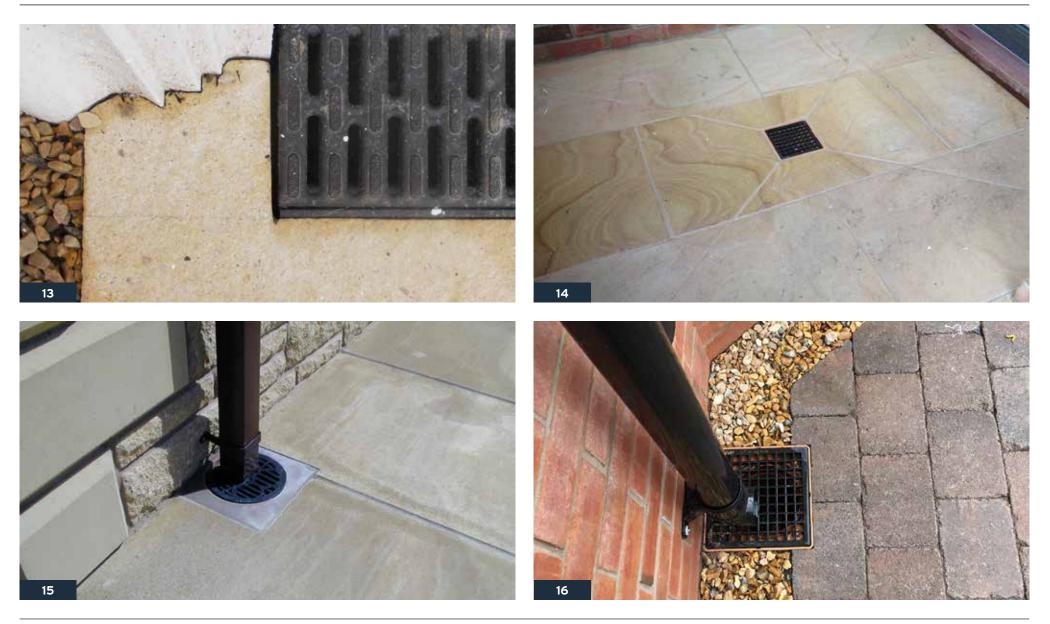


EXTERNAL LANDSCAPING





EXTERNAL LANDSCAPING





SECTION 8 - EXTERNAL WORKS

EXTERNAL LANDSCAPING

The judges will be looking at drives, private roads, footpaths and how the access requirements under Building Regulations are being managed.

External handrails and balustrades and compliance with NHBC Standards will also be considered. The surface should be functional, yet have proper line and level, falls and accurate cutting to add to the attraction of the building as a whole.

Setting out and execution of surface finishes, consideration to other elements of the build, (e.g. DPCs and thresholds) will also form part of the judging.

Advanced thinking about the Building Regulations for ramps, steps and handrails is important, as is neat planning of the positioning of manholes and other service access covers i.e. not half on and half off a footpath.

Neat cutting of slabs or dressing of surface materials around access covers with cleanliness and sharpness of finish are all important consideration points.

Images 9, 10, 11 and 12:

Image 9 is a lovely example where some thought has been put in at groundworks stage as to how footpaths and access chambers and manholes work together. To follow this, the operative laying the pavers has successfully managed to maintain the bond going through the lids.

Image 10 is a similar example of where the lines of the footpath have not been interrupted by the fact that there two manholes on the corner. This is excellent execution.

Image 11 is a novel way of taking a path around a corner, again really nice work.

Image 12 shows how the difference in level has been nicely disguised with a cobble and cement slope.

Images 13, 14, 15 and 16: A lot of the effect is in the fine detail that sometimes gets overlooked. Here are good examples of how paving has been crafted around interruptions in the flow of the paving surface.

Again, all very good work here deserving of at least a 5 - or a 6 if it is this workmanship is consistent around the whole site.



GOOD LUCK!

We hope you have found this best practice guide useful in gaining a better understanding of what the judges are looking for at each stage of construction.

Remember, the six characteristics the judges are looking for in a site manager are:

- consistency
- attention to detail
- technical expertise

- leadership
- interpretation
- health and safety.

We wish you all the very best in the Pride in the Job competition as you strive for your very first win or to repeat or even improve on your performance in previous years.

