

Blue Skies Consortium  
**Brand guidelines**



A high flier in the development world

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## Executive summary

The purpose behind this guide is to increase the use and consistency of the Blue Skies Consortium identity as one means by which members can collectively benefit from the significant achievements and profile that the Consortium enjoys.

Sections 2 and 3 of the guide explain the principles behind the use of the Consortium brand as part of our collective marketing strategy. Sections 4, 5 and 6 provide more technical information of use to designers, printers and others who may be involved with your organisation's reports, brochures, website and so on.

Blue Skies Consortium is a partnership of 16 housing organisations operating primarily across the East Midlands and East of England and stretching into Yorkshire and Humberside and the West Midlands. It's a 'top 10' developer in the National Affordable Housing Programme and has attracted one of the largest development grant allocations outside London for 2008-2011.

The consortium was established in 2006, to combine development capacity and secure affordable housing funding and schemes through partnership. Its collective strength brings in resources and opportunities that might otherwise be unattainable for individual members.

Every time someone sees or reads something from the consortium, they form an opinion about our partnership and its effectiveness. As we grow, it's more important than ever to manage our collective profile carefully. That means sending out consistent, coherent messages to the world about the way we work together and what individual members contribute to the whole; we can then reinforce how much members care about quality and getting things right.

This guide explains the visual elements that make up the consortium's brand identity - the logo, colour and typeface - and how and when members should use them.

By using this guide, you will help us to keep the partnership brand consistent in the eyes of customers, business partners and colleagues. Our goal is to work in tandem with individual member brands so that your unique contribution to the consortium is recognised - and collectively we all become stronger by presenting a united front.

If you have any queries about the guide, please contact Janet Matthews, Longhurst Group Marketing Director, on 01205 319667 or email [janet.matthews@longhurst-group.org.uk](mailto:janet.matthews@longhurst-group.org.uk)

**Alan Whyte**  
Chair of Blue Skies Consortium  
January 2010

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## About branding

Strong branding is about being clear in the way an organisation, partnership, product or service is presented to the world: its 'personality', focus and perceived effectiveness.

Generally, branding is often referred to in a visual context – through representations such as:

- A 'brand mark' such as a logo, icon or picture
- A phrase or strapline
- Colours used on their own or in a particular combination
- Particular styles of photography.

Think of the difference between Waitrose and Aldi; between Burger King and Pizza Express; or Apple and Microsoft. Each of those organisations has decided how it wants to look, who its customers are and what the business stands for.

And whenever you see their products, advertising or news stories, you instinctively know whether you like those brands or not, based on things you have seen and heard about them.

It's the same with Blue Skies Consortium. The way we look, sound and present our partnership to the world influences audience perceptions about us. So all members can play an important role in helping to showcase our achievements to the world and reinforce our status as a 'top 10' developer nationally. Using this guide will help us to maintain a positive and consistent visual identity, and show people that we balance individual and collective talents successfully.

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## When to use the consortium brand

This section covers how and when members should use the Blue Skies Consortium brand.

To get the most out of Blue Skies Consortium, members should take every opportunity to promote the brand. This will increase the strength and visibility of our partnership, whilst also allowing each organisation to benefit from the collective strength and expertise consortium membership brings.

### Examples of materials

If you need to produce development information for your organisation – or marketing materials that include references to development – please follow the guidelines in this publication; this will help us to sustain unity and reinforce the consortium's strength.

Types of collateral where the brand should be used include:

- Development scheme flyers, brochures and related sales/marketing collateral
- Information about open days and partnership events
- Press releases for scheme starts-on-site, completions and opening ceremonies
- Members' annual reports, where these refer to development
- Development-related case studies
- Member companies' websites, or development micro-sites specifically showcasing developments; wherever possible, links to the consortium's own website at [www.blueskiesconsortium.org.uk](http://www.blueskiesconsortium.org.uk) should be promoted.

### How to refer to the consortium in your collateral

We have a joint responsibility to promote the Blue Skies brand. Please use it alongside your own identity – complementing what you do as an individual organisation, and adding weight to the partnership as a whole.

As a minimum, the consortium should be name-checked wherever development opportunities, funding bids or schemes are referred to. This is as simple as saying:

**[Insert member organisation name], part of the Blue Skies Consortium**

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## When to use the consortium brand

Where you are specifically referring to the consortium's role in marketing materials, please use the following form of words wherever possible:

- "Blue Skies Consortium is a partnership of 16 housing organisations which work together to bid for development funding and deliver new schemes across the East Midlands and East of England, but also stretching into the West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside".

Wherever possible, the consortium logo should also be used alongside the textual reference above. Further details of how to use the visual identity are provided in the 'How it works: the logo' section of this guide.

### Media releases and statements

If you issue a press release that includes a reference to or is linked to development secured through Blue Skies Consortium, please include the following explanation either in the main body of the release or your 'notes to editors'. This will help journalists to understand the role and impact of the consortium.

"Blue Skies Consortium was established in 2006. It is a partnership of 16 housing organisations which work together to bid for development funding and deliver new affordable housing schemes primarily across the East Midlands and East of England, but also stretching into the West Midlands and Yorkshire and Humberside".

Between them, consortium partners collectively:

- Own and manage more than 40,000 homes across central and eastern England
- Have secured one of the largest funding allocations outside London from the National Affordable Housing Programme up to 2011
- Will deliver more than 2,000 new affordable homes between 2008 and 2011
- Are active in more than 40 local authority areas.

Blue Skies Consortium is one of the leading development partners recognised by the Homes and Communities Agency.

4. How it works: the logo

a. Colour variations

b. Sizes

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## How it works: the logo

The consortium logo is made up of a number of elements that make it unique. For us to keep it this way, we must use it consistently. This section looks at how our logo is created and how it should be applied.

The Blue Skies Consortium logo includes the following elements:

- The copy **Blue Skies**, created using the typeface City Blue Print
- The copy **consortium**, created using the typeface City Blue Print
- The blue rectangle.

For copies of the logo please contact Janet Matthews, Longhurst Group Marketing Director, on 01205 319667 or [janet.matthews@longhurst-group.org.uk](mailto:janet.matthews@longhurst-group.org.uk)



All elements of the Blue Skies Consortium logo must be used on all published material produced for collective use.

4. How it works: the logo

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## a. Colour variations

The colour version of each logo is the preferred option for all documents and has been designed to sit on a white background.

The Blue Skies Consortium logo uses only one colour as follows:

Pantone Blue 072	
CMYK:	97 / 89 / 0 / 0
RGB:	41 / 65 / 154
Hexadecimal:	#29419A

### Which version do you need?

Type of job	Version to use
Work with a printer/design studio	CMYK or Pantone
Full-colour professional printing	CMYK
Screen output	RGB
Web output	Hexadecimal

If the logo appears against a solid colour, a white-out version should be used as follows:



If you can't use the colour version, or will be photocopying or printing black-and-white, please use the black or 'mono' version shown below.



**Important** - the logo must always be used in one of the included formats. You must not change the colour of the logo.

4. How it works: the logo

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## b. Sizes

The Blue Skies Consortium logo must always be prominent to achieve maximum impact. The appropriate size will vary depending on the format and design of the publication. Here is a guide to common logo sizes for different publications.

**DL - 40mm**

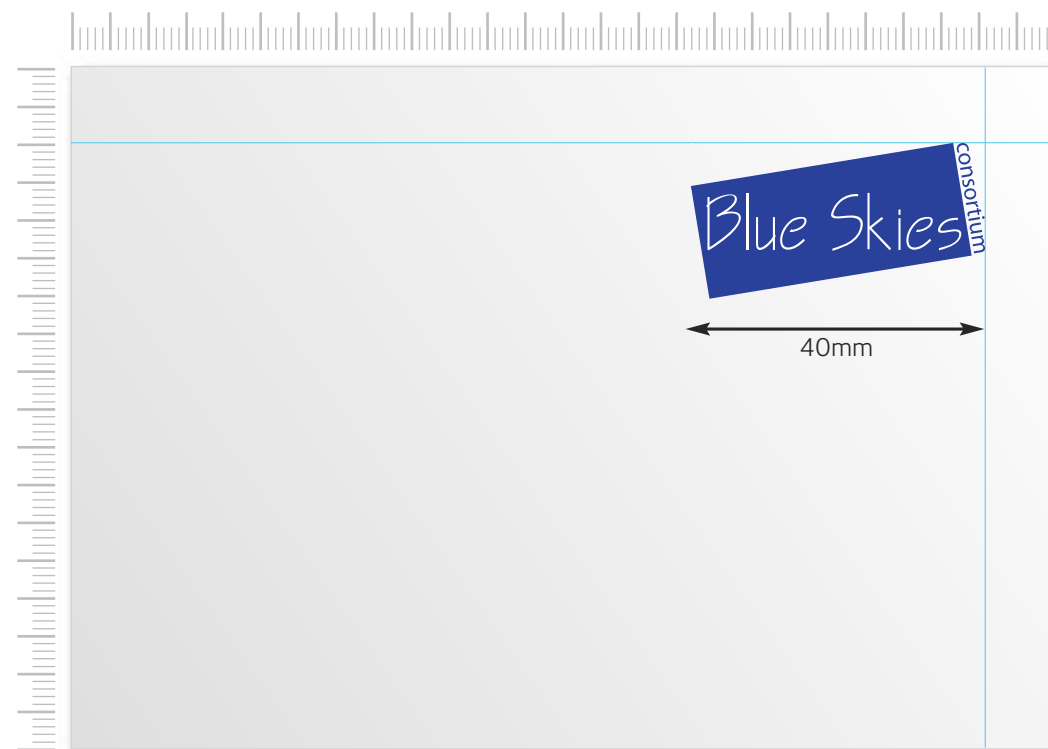
**A4 - 45mm**

**A3 - 50mm**

There is no maximum size for the logo, but the size needs to be appropriate for the application. The most important factor to consider is whether the logo is clear and positioned for maximum impact.

The logo should only be enlarged using original vector artwork files. You should never edit it in Word or similar packages because this will affect the quality of any printed output.

You can download copies of the logo from [www.blueskiesconsortium.org.uk](http://www.blueskiesconsortium.org.uk).



4. How it works: the logo

a. Colour variations

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d. Positioning

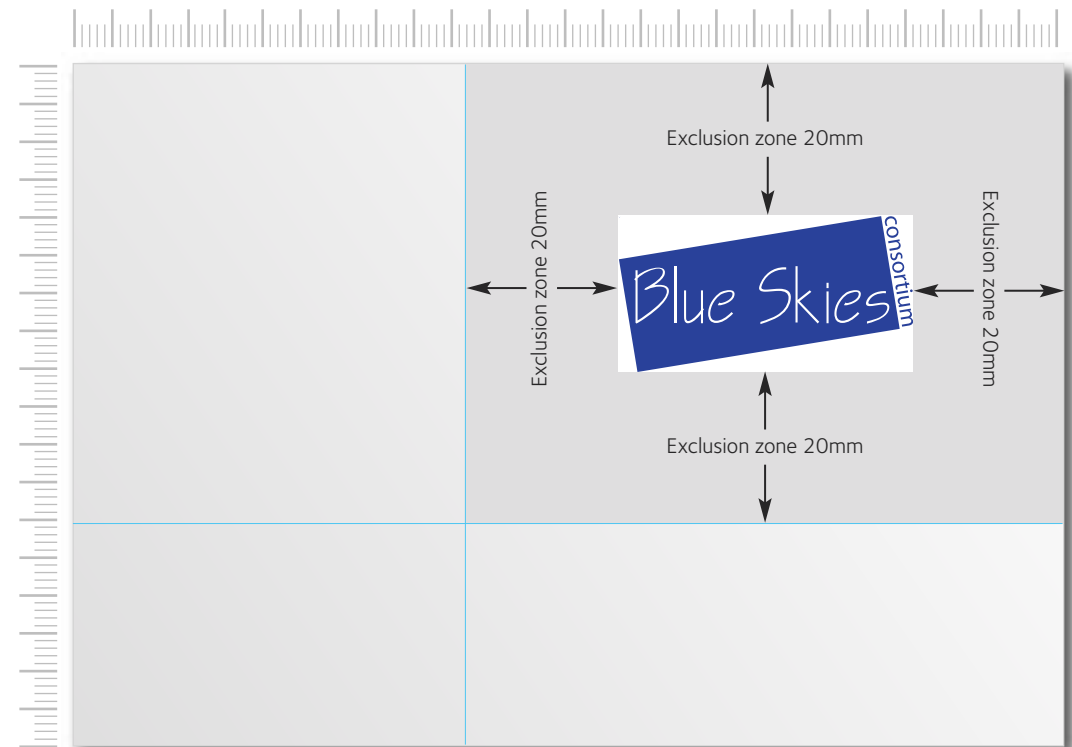
e. Correct size

f. File formats

### c. Exclusion zone

The exclusion zone is the clear area around a logo which helps to make it stand out and have impact. Don't place anything in this area.

The minimum exclusion zone for the Blue Skies Consortium logo is 20mm.



4. How it works: the logo

a. Colour variations

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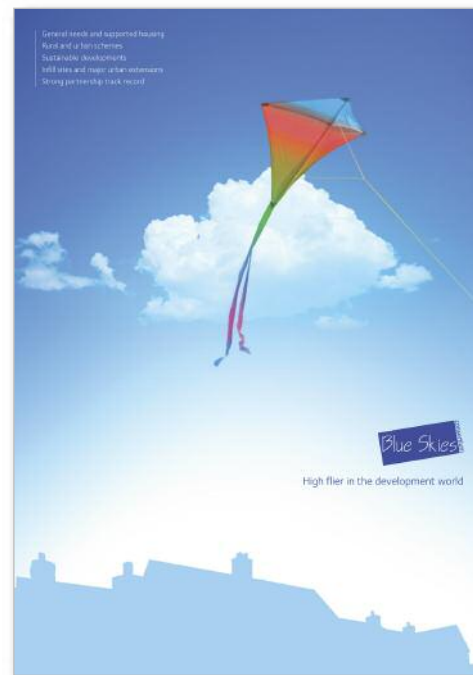
e. Correct size

f. File formats

## d. Positioning

The logo should be positioned to complement members' own brand marks – except for Blue Skies Consortium literature, where it should be positioned for maximum impact. This is often, but not exclusively, the top right-hand or bottom right-hand corner of the page as demonstrated opposite.

The logo should not be used over images or text as this detracts from its impact and clarity. The colour variation of the logo should always be selected to reflect the logo's position, for example, a full colour/black logo should not be used on a dark background, or a white logo on a light background.



4. How it works: the logo

a. Colour variations

b. Sizes

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d. Positioning

e. Correct size

f. File formats

e. Correct size

The logo should always be used in proportion to its original size. It should not be stretched or used on its side or with outlines, as demonstrated below. The brand mark should not be moved from the left of the text.



4. How it works: the logo

a. Colour variations

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## f. File formats

The logos can be provided in different file formats for different publications:

- **EPS files** are high-quality, high-resolution files. They can be scaled to any size without loss of quality. These are most commonly used on printed material, especially if the logo is being used at a large size (for example, on a display stand)
- **TIFF files** are high-resolution files that can be used on some printed applications
- **JPEG files** can be compressed to choose a balance between storage size and image quality. Over time, JPEGs gradually lose their quality through repeated use and compression; they are most suitable for the web or Powerpoint.

For copies of the logo please contact Janet Matthews, Longhurst Group Marketing Director, on 01205 319667 or [janet.matthews@longhurst-group.org.uk](mailto:janet.matthews@longhurst-group.org.uk)

**5. How it works: the colours**

**a. The primary palette**

**b. Tints**

## How it works: the colours

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People recognise the colours and shapes associated with a brand before even reading the name or strapline. So protecting the colour of the Blue Skies Consortium brand is important.

5. How it works: the colours

a. The primary palette

b. Tints

## a. The primary palette

The primary palette is the first choice of colours that should be used on any literature produced for Blue Skies Consortium. As there is only one colour used in the logo, this should be a first choice for documents and reflected within the design in some way.

If a document is produced in association with a specific member organisation, the colours from its logo can be used as primary colours where these will complement the consortium palette.

### Pantone Blue 072

CMYK: 97 / 89 / 0 / 0

RGB: 41 / 65 / 154

Hexadecimal: #29419A

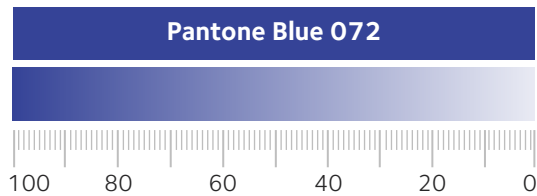
5. How it works: the colours

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## b. Tints

Shown below are the most common tints values for the Blue Skies Consortium primary colour choice.



**6. How it works: typography**

**a. The primary typeface**

**b. The secondary typeface**

## How it works: typography

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Clear and consistent typography is important to maintain a strong brand identity. This section sets out when and how different typefaces should be used.

6. How it works: typography

a. The primary typeface

b. The secondary typeface

## a. The primary typeface

The primary typeface, Foundry Sterling, should be used on all consortium-led, professionally-designed documents for external audiences.

### Foundry Sterling

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO  
PQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy  
1234567890

### Foundry Sterling (Bold)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO  
PQRSTUVWXYZ  
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy  
1234567890

6. How it works: typography

a. The primary typeface

b. The secondary typeface

## b. The secondary typeface

Arial is the secondary typeface for Blue Skies Consortium publications as it is widely available and therefore easy for members to achieve consistency.

### Arial

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO

PQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy

1234567890

### Arial (Bold)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNO

PQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxy

1234567890

This may be used where the corporate typeface is not available, for example on partnership communications, letters and emails.

We recommend using a minimum of 12-point text and follow RNIB 'See It Right' guidelines wherever possible - but members' own brands take precedence on this point.

**Important** - the consortium recommends avoiding other fonts or ornamental text (such as 'WordArt') for any official publications. The 'home-made' look does not work well on professional literature.

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## Further information and contacts

If you need help or advice on any aspect of this guide, please contact either Alan Whyte or Janet Matthews at Longhurst Group:

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