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Press release

Boost for families wishing to build their own home

Review announced on 'Right to Build' day to make it easier for people to build their own home.

Published 30 October 2020

From:
Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-and-local-government>) and The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP (<https://www.gov.uk/government/people/robert-jenrick>)



- Law to be reviewed to make it easier for people dreaming of building their own homes
- Councils urged to ensure planning permission is granted for suitable plots
- Measures follow reforms to place local people at the heart of planning process

A review to make it easier for people to build their own home has been announced by Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick today (30 October 2020).

Building or designing your own home plays an important part in helping people get a foot on the housing ladder. Currently there are around 15,000 of these types of homes built every year – an increase of 50% in 2 years. But there is still more to be done to support the self and custom build industry, last estimated be worth almost £4.5 billion to the UK economy.

Councils are currently required to keep a register of those who wish to build in their local area. And by 30 October each year – ‘Right to Build’ day – councils should have granted planning permission to enough suitable plots to match the demand on their register.

The review announced today will examine how effectively these arrangements support self and custom building, including whether they increase land available to support these homes.

To increase transparency, help understand how councils are meeting the needs of their communities and also support developers understand the demand, Mr Jenrick has also announced that the data councils collect on self and custom build in their area will now be published annually.

And the Housing Secretary has written to councils to ensure they consider the demand for these homes when providing land for building and making planning decisions in their area.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

We are backing people who want to design and build their own home and today I have launched a review to ensure councils provide enough land and take proper consideration for these homes when making planning decisions in their area.

This will help more people get a foot on the housing ladder and support our building industry as we deliver the homes that this country needs.

Andrew Baddeley-Chappell, CEO of the National Custom & Self Build Association (NaCSBA) said:

England has the lowest known rate of self-commissioned homes in the developed world. Our new homes market is crying out for the greener and higher quality build that goes hand-in-hand with more consumer choice. Housing diversification is key to the government’s housing strategy.

This excellent announcement today by the government should help many more people achieve the dream of living in better and more beautiful homes.

Richard Bacon MP, Ambassador for the Right to Build Task Force said:

For many years I have campaigned to increase real choices for the large number of people who want to build their own home or commission a home to their own design from a local SME builder. This led to my private member’s bill becoming the Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act, which the government has subsequently strengthened.

I warmly welcome the government’s review of the current law. Some local councils are already doing an excellent job in providing more opportunities but some others are not yet supporting the spirit of the legislation and have some way to go if they are to grasp the huge opportunities for more and better housing which greater customer choice offers. We need to make sure every council is able to deliver on this important agenda which will help provide more high quality homes.

This follows the recent Planning for the future white paper (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/planning-for-the-future>) published in August, setting out ambitious reforms to modernise the planning system, bringing a new focus on high-quality design and sustainability. The white paper includes proposals to explore how publicly-owned land disposal can support SMEs and the self-build sector.

Ministers from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government will also hold a roundtable with the self and custom build sector as well as councils as part of the review.

Further information

The Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016), sometimes known as 'the Right to Build', requires relevant authorities to:

- keep a register of individuals and groups who wish to self or custom build in their local area
- have regard to demand on their register when undertaking planning, housing, disposal of land and regeneration functions
- grant permissions to enough suitable serviced plots to reflect the demand within 3 years

The Department has already put in place a number of measures to support local councils in meeting requirements around self and custom build, including providing £95,850 of new funding to each local planning authority since 2016 (totalling over £30 million).

It is also supporting councils through the work of the National Custom and Self Build Association's 'Right to Build Task Force', providing £200,000 of funding over the last 2 years.

The National Custom and Self Build Association's 'Right to Build Task Force' has been commissioned to run online workshops with local councils to support the delivery of more self and custom build homes. Further information on the taskforce can be found on the Right to build website (<https://www.righttobuild.org.uk/>).

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