

Home building The facts

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1 Britain is experiencing a housing crisis

- Current home building levels are nowhere near enough to meet demand. Last year 160,000 new homes were built in England, compared with projected household growth of 223,000 per year.¹
- This shortage has contributed to the current affordability crisis - the cost of buying the average home in England has increased over four times faster than the average wage since September 1999.²
- First-time buyers are finding it increasingly difficult to get their foot on the property ladder – 90% of people think property prices are a major problem for first-time buyers in their local community.³



2 The Government has raised home building targets

- The Government has set a housing target of 240,000 homes per year by 2016, and a total of 3 million homes by 2020.⁴



3 Britain's planning system is still not bringing land forward quickly enough to meet housing needs

- It takes on average 15 months for home builders to receive full planning permission on sites they wish to develop. This excludes time taken for pre-application discussions which can extend the whole process to over 2 years in many cases.⁵
- Between 1997 and 2003, the amount of land coming forward for development annually fell by 7%.⁶
- An average of 35% of residential planning applications are rejected, well up from an average of around 16% a decade ago.⁷

4 Britain's home builders are working hard to meet housing needs

- New home completions have risen some 25% since 2001.⁸
- The average new home density in 2006 was 41 dwellings per hectare, up from 25 in 1997, making more efficient use of land.⁹
- Private developers are providing 55% of all affordable homes through their planning contributions.¹⁰



5 Home building does not pose a threat to the countryside

- Between 1997 and 2004, England's Green Belt increased from 1,650,000 to 1,678,200 hectares (an expansion of 1.7%). Green Belt land now comprises 13% of total land in England.¹¹
- Only 8% of land in the UK is classed as urban, half the figure in Holland and lower than Belgium, Denmark and Germany.¹²
- Even an extra 120,000 homes being built per year in the South East – four times the current rate – would only use an additional 0.75% of the total land area of the South East over the next ten years.¹³

6 New homes are far more environmentally friendly and sustainable

- The Government's plan for all new homes to be zero-carbon by 2016 will make the UK a world-leader in low-carbon living.
- Building standards introduced in 2006 have seen a 40% increase in energy efficiency in new homes in the last 5 years.¹⁴
- New building standards on water efficiency will reduce water usage by 16% per person per day, in all new homes from 2008.¹⁵



Did you know?

76% of new home purchasers surveyed say they are satisfied with the overall quality of their home, with 77% saying they would recommend their builder to a friend.¹⁶

1 CLG, house building and household formation figures, March 2007
2 Trade Union Congress, September 2007
3 New Homes Marketing Board, YouGov Survey, September 2007
4 Housing Green Paper, CLG, July 2007
5 HBF research, November 2006
6 CLG land use change statistics, 2007
7 CLG quarterly planning performance statistics, 2007
8 CLG quarterly house building statistics, 2007
9 CLG land-use change statistics, 2007
10 NHBC, house building statistics, May 2005
11 CLG local planning authority green belt statistics, January 2007
12 "Unaffordable housing – fables and myths", Policy Exchange Report, June 2005
13 "Review of Housing Supply – Final Report", Kate Barker, March 2004
14 CLG, 2006
15 CLG "Water efficiency in new buildings", July 2007
16 HBF Customer Satisfaction Survey, April 2007

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Home building pictures courtesy of the Prince's Foundation for the Built Environment, showing developments which were recognised by HBF and the Foundation for adopting foundation design principles that help improve the quality of life for the people who live there.