

HBF star rating scheme

Scheme rules v.3 (February 2017)

Introduction

Scheme rules

Logo usage
design guidelines

Section 1

Introduction

Introduction

The HBF Star Rating Scheme is an award scheme for home builders, which recognises excellence in customer satisfaction. Each year the Home Builders Federation (HBF) awards Members a Star Rating of between one and five stars based on homeowners' feedback collected via the National New Homes Survey carried out by the National House-Building Council (NHBC).

The Star Rating Logo appearing in Section 3 is a trademark of HBF and the Star Rating Logo and the Star Rating award may only be used in accordance with the rules laid out in Section 2.

Section 2

Scheme rules

Scheme rules

1) In these Rules:

- a) **'HBF'** refers to the Home Builders Federation, incorporated and registered in England and Wales with company number 02764757.
- a) **'NHBC'** refers to the National House-Building Council incorporated and registered in England and Wales with company number 320784.
- b) **'Members'** refers to HBF members whose membership is current (with all fees paid up to date) who have advised HBF that they wish to participate in the Star Rating Scheme. Any person, firm or company that is not a member of HBF with its fees paid up to date is not a 'Member' for the purpose of these Rules.
- c) **'Rules'** means the rules set out in this document.
- d) **'Star Rating Logo'** means the logo appearing in Section 3 which is a trademark of the Home Builders Federation.
- e) **'Star Rating'** refers to the Star Ratings awarded to an individual Member under the Star Rating Scheme.
- f) **'Star Rating Scheme'** refers to the scheme for awarding and use of Star Ratings as described in this document.
- g) **'Survey'** means the National New Homes Survey (variant sent at 8 weeks after legal completion date) as operated by NHBC.
- h) **'Survey Year'** means the 12 month period commencing 1st October and ending 30th September the following calendar year (based on legal completion date of the new home).
- i) **'Group'** means a parent undertaking and its subsidiary undertakings as defined in Part 15 and section 474(1) of the Companies Act 2006.
- j) Words in the singular shall include the plural and vice versa.
- k) Any reference to the Star Rating Scheme shall be construed as a reference to the scheme in force for the time being and as amended, varied or supplemented from time to time by HBF.

- 2) HBF will inform Members in writing of their HBF Star Rating only when all Star Ratings to be awarded in the year in question have been decided by HBF.

- 3) Subject to Rule 4), the Star Rating Scheme is for the benefit and use of Members awarded a Star Rating for customer satisfaction (if the award is confirmed to them in writing by HBF). Any Member may use the Star Rating awarded to them (if the award is confirmed to them in writing by HBF) together with the Star Rating Logo, but only in the manner stated in these Rules (any other use is not permitted unless it is with the separate written permission of HBF).

- 4) The decision to award a Star Rating to a Member and the permission to use the Star Ratings awarded and the permission to use the Star Rating Logo are all at HBF's sole discretion. HBF has the right to and may decide i) not to award a Star Rating to any Member, ii) to withdraw a Member's permission to use a Star Rating awarded and/or to withdraw a Member's permission to use the Star Rating Logo; in which case the Member concerned must cease to use the Star Rating and Star Rating Logo upon being informed in writing by HBF.
- 5) Any person, firm or company not being a Member is not entitled to use or refer to the Star Rating Scheme, a Star Rating or the Star Rating logo for any purpose unless they have the written permission of HBF.
- 6) Members may only use the Star Rating Logo and their Star Rating for promotional purposes and may not use or rely on the Star Rating for any other purpose without HBF's written permission.
- 7) Members may only use the Star Rating Logo and their Star Rating in a manner whereby the number of stars actually awarded and the year in which they were awarded is clearly stated. Members must ensure that it is very clear in any use of the Star Rating what their current rating is. Members can not refer to in any way a dated Star Rating awarded in previous years.
- 8) Members may not make any alteration (as to size, shape, colour and any other characteristics) to the Star Rating Logo nor at any time use any other logo or device which is similar to or may be confused with the Star Rating Logo. The design guidelines for use of the Star Rating logo are defined in Section 3.
- 9) Members may not use the Star Rating Scheme, Star Rating Logo or their Star Rating for any purpose or in any way that would be unlawful and Members must ensure that all use of and references to the Star Rating Scheme, Star Rating Logo or their Star Rating is in compliance with the requirements of the Advertising Standards Authority's UK Code of Non-Broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (CAP Code) or UK Code of Broadcast Advertising (BCAP Code) (as applicable).
- 10) Members may not make any claims by reference to the HBF Star Rating Scheme, Star Rating Logo or their Star Rating which specifically or generally refers to or makes a direct comparison with or denigrates in any way any other person, firm or company (whether Members or not).
- 11) Members may not use or refer to the statistical data underlying their Star Rating in the public domain.
- 12) Members that are part of a Group of companies may only use the Star Rating awarded to the Group and may not assume a Star Rating for any subsidiary of the Group.
- 13) Star Ratings will be based on Survey responses from persons purchasing new homes built and sold by any company within a Member's Group company structure; Members may not selectively exclude from the Survey or Star Rating Scheme parts of their Group that build and/or sell new homes.
- 14) The Star Rating Scheme should not be used for any purpose that in the opinion of HBF brings the Scheme into disrepute.

Star Rating Scheme participation rules

- 15) Members wishing to participate in the Star Rating scheme must build at least 20 new homes per year for private sale within the UK.
- 16) Members are required to provide a regular data submission (at least monthly) to NHBC including details of all legal completions for private sale new homes that they have built (regardless of warranty provider). Details to be included in the data submission are: the homebuyer(s) name(s) and full postal address, legal completion date, and optionally also their email address(es) and mobile telephone number(s). Members are required to sign and abide by a 'data sharing agreement' which will be provided by NHBC at the point of joining the Survey and this may be amended from time to time by NHBC. Member's data submissions will be regularly audited to ensure that Members provide full and complete information. If it is identified that a Member is not providing regular or complete data submissions then NHBC will notify HBF who will take appropriate action which may lead to a Star Rating being withheld from the Member.
- 17) Where sites registered to a Member are built and/or marketed and sold by another party not forming part of the Member's Group, the Member may request that the site be excluded from the Survey. Part sites (i.e. specific plots on a site but not all plots) may not be excluded. Requests to exclude a site from the Survey and Star Rating Scheme should be made in writing to NHBC or HBF and the justification for exclusion clearly stated. Sites will be excluded from the Survey and Star Rating Scheme at the discretion of NHBC and HBF.
- 18) Members may join the Star Rating Scheme at any time during the Survey Year, however typically a Star Rating is only awarded after a Member has participated for a full Survey Year. A Star Rating may be awarded on part year results at HBF's discretion, provided that a sufficiently robust response rate is achieved as determined by HBF and if the Member so chooses.
- 19) New Members will not have their Star Rating published until they notify HBF that they wish to do so. There is no obligation on new Members to publish a rating until they wish to. Once a Member has published a Star Rating they cannot opt to publish some years and not others. Should a participant inform HBF that they no longer wish to publish a Star Rating, they will in effect be withdrawn from the Star Rating Scheme and will not normally be permitted to re-join for a period of at least two years.
- 20) For a Member to be awarded a Star Rating a sufficient number of valid responses must be achieved as determined by HBF.
- 21) Members may encourage homeowners to respond to the Survey by informing them of its existence prior to the commencement of the invitation process which begins exactly 8 weeks after legal completion. However, once the invitation process has started Members should not discuss the survey with the respondent or pressurise them to complete it.
- 22) Members may not offer respondents any direct financial or other benefit or incentive that is any way linked to completing the Survey or answering any of the questions in the Survey in a particular way. Members may advise respondents that they will make a charitable donation for each returned Survey.
- 23) Members must not under any circumstances seek to intercept the survey whilst en-route to or from the respondent and NHBC.
- 24) In line with the Bribery Act 2010 Members must not incentivise or pressurise respondents into completing the Survey with dishonest responses, this applies to all questions in the Survey including the respondent's right to keep their responses anonymous.
- 25) To avoid the perception and/or possibility of influence, Members must not be present when the respondent completes the Survey,
- 26) Members may not use the Survey as a means of validating their own consumer referral or incentive schemes as this may bring the Survey or Star Rating Scheme into disrepute.
- 27) Once responses are received they cannot be amended or retracted due to the potential for the respondent to have been incentivised or otherwise influenced to dishonestly amend or retract their response.

Section 3

Logo usage design guidelines

Logo usage design guidelines

The preferred format for HBF star rating logo is white-out against a coloured background.



There is also a two-colour version available for situations where the white-out format is not practical.



Primary colour 1 (C20/M0/Y30/K68)
Primary colour 2 (C0/M0/Y20/K35)

The mono logo may only be used for one-colour documents such as fax sheets.



Logo



Minimum Size



Exclusion Zone



The exclusion zone is the height of 'X' (i.e. the width of the 'H') all the way around the logo.

Colours

1



C: 20
M: 0
Y: 30
K: 68

2



C: 0
M: 0
Y: 20
K: 35

Logo



Do's and don'ts



Logo



Contact details

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