



NEW GUIDE TO HELP PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANISATIONS ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT MORE SELF BUILDING

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A comprehensive Practice Guide has been published in National Self Build Week (4-12 May 2013) to help encourage more local authorities and housing associations to get involved in supporting the growth of the self build sector.

The Guide explains the many advantages that come with delivering more homes this way – self build homes can be very cost effective, the people who construct them are generally very happy with their properties as they were involved in their design, and the homes they build are often much greener. The Guide points out that each new self build home safeguards seven construction jobs for a year, and results in at least £50,000 worth of orders for local suppliers. And many new self build projects involve people learning construction skills that can help them gain employment in the future.

Produced by the National Self Build Association (NaSBA), the Guide showcases 16 different self build ‘models’ – from Cohousing schemes to the provision of serviced self build plots; from enabled community-led self build schemes to innovative solutions delivered by private sector partners. The Guide provides a short explanation of the pros and cons of each approach and includes a number of case studies for each approach.

NaSBA Chair Ted Stevens said: “We believe about 50-60 local authorities are already doing something to encourage more self build on their patch, and between them they are progressing projects that should deliver thousands of additional opportunities for would-be self builders. But there are nearly 300 other councils that we have yet to convince. We hope this Guide will reassure them, and help them work out what solution is best for them. If every council was involved it could result in tens of thousands of additional homes being built this way”.

The National Planning Policy Framework now requires all local authorities to measure the demand there is for self build homes in their area, and to then to make provision for them. Up to now its been very difficult to find all the current ways of encouraging self build explained in one document, so the new Guide should prove helpful.

Housing Minister Mark Prisk MP said: “This excellent Guide provides councils and housing associations with a good overview of the many ways they can encourage self build in their area. Some councils are already doing this, but others could do much more. So I urge them to use this Guide to ensure people in their local community can also have the opportunity to build their own home”.

The Self Build industry’s champion, Kevin McCloud welcomed the Guide: “I’d like to see us become a nation of self builders – like the Germans, the Australians, or the Dutch. What if each household in the UK had the option to buy a modest plot of land and build their own place, with support and encouragement from the public sector? What if there was a new spirit of collaboration between planners, communities and the construction industry? I believe the result would be inspirational. We’d see more custom designed homes that reflect where they are. They’d be built to higher standards and to a better quality. We’d see people sharing skills, and saving money. We’d see neighbours working together on community self build schemes, and local construction economies thriving. And we’d certainly see more energy efficient buildings that embrace the latest green technologies.”

Copies of the full 20 page document can be downloaded from [NaSBA's website](#).

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Notes:

1. The first ever National Self Build Week (NSBW) takes place from 4-12 May 2013 and consists of a wide-ranging programme of events to help millions of Britons turn their self build dreams into a reality.

The news of the initiative coincides with the results of an exclusive IpsosMORI poll, which shows that around six million people in Britain are currently planning or researching how to build a home for themselves and want to start their new home in the next year or so. The survey also suggests that one million people have already moved from the 'researching' to the 'action' stage, and are currently in the process of acquiring a building plot, obtaining planning permission or expect to start construction in the next 12 months.

Despite all this interest, in 2012 only around 12,000 Britons managed to build a home this way. And the UK's self build output is a fraction of that delivered by most European countries.

This mismatch between 'desire' to build a home and the actual output clearly highlights the need for NSBW.

One of the key aims of the initiative is to help more people understand the many ways it is now possible to get a home built. For example the Week will help explain what a Custom Build Home is; it will showcase some of the more innovative ways local authorities, specialist developers/enablers and others have been pioneering the delivery of self build homes; and it will provide lots of practical advice for would-be self builders.

NSBW is being organised by the National Self Build Association (NaSBA) and Grand Designs Live, and is supported by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). It coincides with the huge Grand Designs Live exhibition that takes place at Excel in London.