

Custom and Self-build Information sheet

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Please note: much of this information has been cut and pasted from the national custom build and self-build association website

Councils are supporting private homebuilding projects in a range of different ways to reflect their local objectives and circumstances

Percentage policies that require a proportion of all larger housing developments to be reserved for custom and self-build homes are being adopted by more and more councils, and this seems to be an effective way of generating significant numbers of plots where there is established demand

Private homebuilding developments are being supported through local affordable housing policies

Exception Site policies are a good way of generating opportunities for a steady stream of affordable privately built homes in rural areas

Land disposals and acquisitions for private homebuilding are becoming more widely used. Many councils are including private homebuilding opportunities when they identify and allocate new sites and areas for housing

The following examples from around the country represent a mix of housing strategy and planning policy mechanisms that have been used by others:

Huntingdonshire

Huntingdonshire – has emerging policy that asks proposals of 200 or more homes to make 5 per cent of the plots available for self-build. It says plots should be spread across the development, and actively marketed and that they should be reasonably priced reflecting prevailing market values. Plots that are not taken up by self-builders within three years of becoming available should be built out by the site developer.

Teignbridge

Teignbridge - on sites of more than 20 dwellings developers are asked to supply at least 5 per cent of the plots for sale to private homebuilders. On developments of more than ten plots the council asks for a Design Code. The council requires homes to be completed within three years of a private homebuilder purchasing a plot; and where plots have been made available and marketed appropriately for at least 12 months and have not sold, the plot(s) may either remain on the open market as custom build or be offered to the council or a

housing association before being built out by the developer. Teignbridge is also working with affordable housing providers and other partners, including The Land Society, to provide affordable self-build plots for local people in housing need.

Affordable Housing Shropshire

Shropshire - has a well-established 'Build your own Affordable Home' scheme for single plot Exceptions Sites. This positively encourages local people to build their own affordable home to meet their own housing needs - so long as the site is in a recognisable settlement and its future value is controlled so that it remains affordable to other local people in the future. Sites may be permitted outside of the main towns and villages as an exception to the normal planning policies that restrict housing development in such areas. Restrictions are that the value of property will be capped at 60 per cent by a section 106 agreement; size is restricted to 100 sq. m gross internal floor area.

West Oxfordshire - identifies locations where new housing will be encouraged through partnership working with local communities, landowners and self-build groups. Developers will be required to demonstrate how their proposals help to meet the needs of these particular groups, including self-builders. Commuted sums received from developers will be used to subsidise the provision of affordable housing throughout the district including the potential acquisition of land to facilitate community self-build schemes in appropriate locations.

Graven Hill Cherwell

Cherwell - purchased the former MOD site at Graven Hill and is now building the largest single private homebuilders development in the UK (1,900 homes). The council also has a custom build housing programme called 'Build!' which is delivering 250 homes in Banbury and Bicester on a shared ownership, outright sale, or to rent at 80 per cent of the open market value. A number of projects in other locations are also being progressed.

Cherwell - under the 'Build!' programme the council can signpost people to mortgages that are specifically tailored for self-build properties.

St Albans - as identified some major extensions for at least 4,000 homes, with private homebuilding opportunities included within these.

Malvern Hills - says that all new residential developments of five or more units should contain a viable mix of sizes, housing types and tenures to help meet the identified range of locally evidenced housing needs. These developments should provide a choice of housing, including the provision of more low cost, smaller homes and bungalows. These could be of different tenures and include, where appropriate, bungalows and custom-build homes.