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Right to Build Task Force

Custom and Self-Build Planning Guidance

PG2.1: Delivering a sufficient supply of custom and self-build homes

Previously numbered as PG2

February 2025

Version 4.1

Supported by:



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1. INTRODUCTION

1. This document forms part of the Right to Build Task Force Custom and Self-Build Planning Guidance. The guidance consists of an overview, together with separate planning guidance documents and appendices.
2. This guidance has been designed to complement existing legislation and regulations, together with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and in particular National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) in relation to custom and self-build.
3. Together the guidance sets out good practice guidance to support the delivery of custom and self-build homes in England. By “good practice” we mean information at a level of detail that is otherwise not available to support an approach that best aligns with the aims, the letter, and the spirit of the legislation.
4. It is intended for use by:
 - a. Those responsible for planning policies and decisions within local authorities and National Parks in England.
 - b. Planning Inspectors and those engaged in review of planning decisions and planning policies.
 - c. Landowners and land promoters.
 - d. Those seeking to bring forward or support custom and self-build developments.
 - e. All those interested in better and more beautiful homes.
5. The guidance is published by the Right to Build Task Force and it is regularly updated to reflect emerging good practice and in response to any relevant changes in legislation, regulation or policy. The latest version of the guidance can be found at www.righttobuild.org.uk. A full list of all guidance documents and appendices is included at the end of this document.
6. All references are correct at the time of publication.
7. Feedback on this document and the associated good practice guidance notes is welcome and any comments should be sent to Taskforce@righttobuild.org.uk

2. THE RIGHT TO BUILD TASK FORCE

8. The Right to Build is the generally used term for a collection of primary and secondary legislation introduced to support the growth in the number of custom and self-build homes within England.
9. The Right to Build Task Force (Task Force) was established by the National Custom and Self-Build Association (NaCSBA) in 2017. NaCSBA is the voice of the custom and self-build housing sector.
10. The aim of the Task Force is to support the delivery of the Right to Build through the provision of technical expertise and advice based on a model that has been used successfully in the Netherlands.
11. The Task Force provides help to local authorities, community groups and other organisations across the UK to deliver large, affordable, custom, and self-build projects.
12. An ethical wall separates the activities of NaCSBA and the Task Force. A Task Force Advisory Board, made up of experts and advisors from national and local government, industry and community housing, provides strategic oversight of our work.
13. The Task Force is currently funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government to provide support to Local Planning Authorities in England. The views here are however those of the Task Force, formed by our sector experience.

3. SUMMARY: Delivering Sufficient Supply of Homes

14. Councils have a statutory duty to consider the demand for custom and self-build (CSB) homes and to consider this in plan making and decision taking and this is repeated in the NPPF. The NPPF specifically requires local plans to be informed by a local housing needs assessment and explicitly requires that this should consider the needs of different groups including, but not limited to, people wishing to commission their own homes (NPPF para 63). Self-build and custom housebuilding are further defined in the Right to Build Task Force Planning Guidance (PG1.2).
15. The Government's (February 2021) [Self-build and custom housebuilding Planning Practice \(PPG\)](#) explains that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) "should consider how local planning policies may address identified requirements for self and custom housebuilding to ensure enough serviced plots with suitable permission come forward" (Ref ID: 57-025-20210508).
16. In identifying strategic demand, plan-makers should consider that the Government is actively seeking to increase the supply of Custom and Self Build (CSB) homes as part of its drive to significantly boost the overall supply of homes. The importance of **local** economic benefits in self-building, in contrast to volume building, is also locally relevant.
17. Short- to medium-term demand from a local authority's self-build Register is only one source of data and its use for strategic and policy planning is limited as it represents a snapshot in time and a small subset of people wishing to build or commission their own homes, rather than an objective assessment of demand. Longer-term demand must be assessed as part of the plan-making process. This may form part of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) or a bespoke CSB demand assessment framework.
18. CSB is appropriate for all housing types, not just detached homes, including apartments, terraced and semi-detached homes and is suitable for both large and small development sites. Current identified demand is mostly focussed on individual plots, and smaller developments but growth in the sector is anticipated to be strongly associated with greater inclusion on larger sites.
19. Percentage-based policies on larger sites are an effective part of the solution to delivering more serviced plots but must be part of a broader policy approach including support for smaller developments and individual plots. **Appendix 1** identifies some examples of adopted policies.
20. Since individual custom and self-builders may lack the time, resources and have limited understanding of the plan-making process, planning authorities should work collaboratively with the CSB housebuilding industry to establish how local demand for CSB will be met.

4. BENEFITS OF PROMOTING CSB

21. Supporting and encouraging CSB housing delivery helps local authorities meet specific local housing need and encourages the efficient use of land by facilitating the delivery of small and infill sites.
22. The promotion of CSB sites can contribute towards the diversification of the local housing supply and often results in the delivery of more high-quality, bespoke homes. Indeed, the individual design and varied use of materials characteristic of CSB projects can be said to result in more interesting and attractive homes than from developer-led sites.
23. This diversification of the housing supply increases the range of developers and housebuilders upon which development is reliant, resulting in a more resilient supply.
24. CSB projects are often built to high sustainability standards and make use of environmentally friendly construction techniques, renewable energy sources and technology to future proof the longevity of the buildings and their use. Research for the Right to Build Task Force in 2023 found that on average Custom and Self Build homes have **35% less CO2 emissions compared** with volume new build.
25. CSB projects can have a positive impact upon the local economy, particularly the construction industry, helping to support small and medium-sized builders (SMEs) and the associated supply chain. Additionally, it also delivers multiple benefits for individuals, communities, landowners, and councils. It meets a specific housing need, and it generally delivers more sustainable housing being locally commissioned and built.
26. Research undertaken by Chamberlain Walker Economics on behalf of the Right to Build Task Force in 2023 estimated that 44 pence in every pound invested in CSB homes is spent locally, more than double the estimated 21 pence in every pound invested by mainstream housebuilders. This research considered how custom and self-builders procure materials and labour. It is estimated that 19% of CSB spend on materials is local compared to just 6% for the mainstream housebuilders. With regards to labour, it was found that 26% of labour is local (including the economic value of DIY labour). This is higher than the estimated 16% of major housebuilders spend local. See the Right to Build Task Force [Advice note 2.1 – Local Economic Benefits of Custom and Self-Build](#) for more details.

5. COUNCIL DUTIES ON PLAN-MAKING AND DELIVERY

27. Duties on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) are described briefly in the Right to Build Task force advice note [AN: 1.2 – Right to Build obligations](#). The legal and policy requirements can be summarised as follows.

Legal Requirements (Statutory Duties)

28. The [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Regulations 2016](#) the [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015](#) (as amended) are generally referred to as the Right to Build legislation. These duties require LPAs to:
- *keep and publicise* a Register of people who want to self- or custom build in their area;
 - *have regard to* Register when exercising planning, housing, land disposal, regeneration functions; and
 - *meet demand* by granting permission for enough serviced plots to meet demand on a rolling annual basis (three years to deliver).
29. The *Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act* confers a responsibility on LPAs to keep a self-build register and to give sufficient development permission to enough suitable serviced plots of land to meet local demand.
30. Plan making is a key function of local planning authorities and having regard to the register in relation to Plan Making (Self build Act (2)(4)) includes recognising the status of the register as only a partial representation of need.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

31. The NPPF has had support for self-builders since the first issue in 2012. At present there are two key guiding requirements in the NPPF (Dec 24 numbering). As part of the Delivering a sufficient supply of homes chapter, the framework states:
- NPPF63 – *Within this context of establishing need, the size type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies. These groups should **include...people wishing to commission or build their own homes.***
32. And in relation to policies and decision making LPAs are advised:
- NPPF71 - *Mixed tenure sites can provide a range of benefits, including creating diverse communities and supporting timely build out rates, and local planning authorities should support their development through their policies and decisions (although this should not preclude schemes that are mainly, or entirely, for Social Rent or other affordable housing tenures from being supported). Mixed tenure sites can include a mixture of ownership and rental tenures, including Social Rent, other rented affordable housing and build to rent, as well as housing designed for specific groups such as older people's housing and student accommodation, and plots sold for custom or self-build.*

- NPPF73 – *Small and medium sized sites can make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area, are essential for Small and Medium Enterprise house builders to deliver new homes, and are **often built out relatively quickly**. To promote the development of a good mix of sites local planning authorities should:*
 - A) *identify, through the development plan and brownfield registers, land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare; unless it can be shown, through the preparation of relevant plan policies, that there are strong reasons why this 10% target cannot be achieved;*
 - B) *seek opportunities, through **policies and decisions, to support small sites to come forward for community-led development for housing and self-build and custom housing**;*
 - C) *use tools such as **area-wide design assessments, permission in principle and Local Development Orders** to help bring small and medium sized sites forward;*
 - D) *support the development of **windfall sites** through their policies and decisions – giving great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes; and*
 - E) *work with developers to encourage the **sub-division of large sites** where this could help to speed up the delivery of homes.*

Planning Practice Guidance

33. The [Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Planning Practice Guidance](#) (PPG)¹ largely re-states and clarifies the right to build legislation. It provides some additional information on operation of self-build registers, how self-build factors into Strategic Housing Market Assessments, and interpreting the Duty to Grant Permissions. In relation to plan making, the NPPG states:

“Relevant authorities should consider how local planning policies may address identified requirements for self and custom housebuilding to ensure enough serviced plots with suitable permission come forward” (ID: 57-025-20210508).

34. In terms of assessment strategic demand, the NPPG specifically notes the need to look at demand beyond the register.

“Local planning authorities should use the demand data from the registers in their area, supported as necessary by additional data from secondary sources (as outlined in the housing and economic development needs guidance), to understand and consider future need for this type of housing in their area. Secondary sources can include data from building plot search

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/self-build-and-custom-housebuilding>

*websites, enquiries for building plots recorded by local estate agents and surveys of local residents. Demand assessment tools can also be utilised.”
(ID: 57-011-20210208)*

Supporting CSB in Policy and Practice

35. The Right to Build legislation came about because access to permissioned land represents the largest single barrier to growth of the custom and self-build housebuilding sector. The planning system is flexible but complex and the risk and costs of bringing forward development is high, and self-build is almost exclusively available to the very wealthy, often through purchasing a home to demolish and rebuild.
36. As noted, English law and policy requires LPAs to plan to adequately meet the needs of those who wish to commission or build their own homes, and this is clearly a material consideration in individual planning applications. This should apply even where in overall terms the five-year supply of deliverable housing sites can be shown to be met².
37. In 2021, the Government undertook a review of the Custom and Self Build market, in a document known as The Bacon Review. This report identified the ongoing strength of demand and opportunity and benefit of Custom and Self Build housing in the UK and made a series of recommendations as to how this could be further supported. A number of the recommendations from this review have been taken forward such as funding to support the delivery of Custom and Self Build housing and the establishment of a Self-Commissioned Housing team within Homes England, in 2023, to support the coordination of delivery of Custom and Self Build housing schemes.
38. In 2023, the publication of the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act (LURA) also emphasised and clarified the Government’s position and expectation in terms of planning for and delivery of Custom and Self Build homes. It provided updates in terms of the approach to counting plots and monitoring of delivery against the Registers, through an update to the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015. The 2024 consultation on planning reforms and modifications to the NPPF showed further support for enabling this missing sector of the housing market.

² Recent appeal decisions demonstrates this (e.g. Droitwich 3241879).

6. ASSESSING DEMAND FOR CSB

Self-build Registers and effective demand for plots

39. Local Plans are required to make specific land provision for the delivery of homes for 10 years and, ideally, for up to 15 years. In considering CSB land supply, future growth in demand should be factored in, particularly as CSB is a way of delivering more homes, higher quality and introducing diversity and choice into the housing market.
40. Self and custom build has for a long time been missing as an effective part of new housing delivery in England due to the nature of land ownership exacerbated by lack of enabling policies. In many comparable countries Custom and Self Build represents around half of all new home completions; England is an extreme outlier with around 5% of new builds being self or custom build.
41. Research shows a significant proportion of the public would like to self-build one day, a number that is in the same range as those who would like to buy a speculative new build house³ finding that 32% of people are interested in building their own home, but only 17% of people were unaware of the self build registers. This supports a 2018 survey which showed less than 20% of people had heard of the registers.
42. Economic modelling for the 2021 Independent review into scaling up self-build and custom housebuilding, [The Bacon Review](#), found that *“All things considered, it seems likely that true demand for CSB in England is at least 30,000 a year, as a minimum, and could conceivably be as high as 100,000 homes a year.”*
43. This suggests that with appropriate enabling policies the long-term growth ambition can be achieved, but this can only happen with appropriate planning and it is the LPA’s responsibility to demonstrate how it is bringing forward plots to meet the need identified on their Registers.
44. The rate of growth is dependent on a wide range of factors, but the Housing and Planning Act of 2016 established an ambition that the self and custom build sector would double in size over four years. This would equate to the **growth** of the sector by around 5% of the overall supply every four years.

Local Registers

45. Local Registers provide a snapshot of the most engaged potential self builders in an area and establish the proxy figure referred to in the right to build legislation, but these only represent a small slice of demand. Some LPAs have introduced two part registers – Part 1 for those who meet all eligibility criteria; and Part 2 for those who meet all but the local connection test⁴. The Right to Build Task Force Planning Guidance notes [PG2.6 - Maintaining open and inclusive registers](#) and [PG3.1 - Using register numbers to identify plots to be permissioned](#) provide further detail with respect to the Self-Build Register.

³ Source YouGov survey. Total sample size > 2000 adults. Fieldwork was undertaken online, between 9th–11th October 2020.

⁴ PPG paragraph 017

46. LPAs report annually to MHCLG the numbers joining the register and as of October 2022 more than 85,000 had joined. Within the data it clearly demonstrated that the introduction of charges and eligibility tests cause numbers joining registers fall dramatically which is further evidence that these registrations only represent a small portion of demand.

Table 01 Numbers joining registers from MHCLG data (England)

Base Period	Date range for base period	Individuals	Groups
1	1 April 2016 - 30 Oct 2016	17,582	267
2	31 Oct 2016 - 30 Oct 2017	16,493	301
3	31 Oct 2017 - 30 Oct 2018	10,524	241
4	31 Oct 2018 - 30 Oct 2019	10,581	122
5	31 Oct 2019 - 30 Oct 2020	9,377	140
6	31 Oct 2020 - 30 Oct 2021	12,262	157
7	31 Oct 2021 - 30 Oct 2022	8,034	99
Totals as of Oct 2022		84,853	1,327

47. Some LPAs are concerned that people may join more than one register, which may not be unusual for close neighbouring authorities. However, given the significant under-representation there is no indication that registers over-represent demand. LPAs who are concerned should add a question to registration joining forms asking people joining the register if they have entered onto other registers.

Strategic Housing Needs Assessment

48. The Register has limitations in achieving accurate demand measurement and does not represent the goal of creating new, additional channels of new homes delivery. There is reliance upon publicity of registers by local planning authorities with few having resources to do so. Therefore, reliance solely on data from registers risks underestimating the need CSB housebuilding plots in the longer term. Augmenting data from the self-build Register with additional data from secondary sources is crucial due to the short-term and opt-in nature of self-build Registers, in which LPAs only keep a record of people who have decided to register.
49. Evidence of need for CSB plots should be derived for a given planning authority with CSB demand being assessed as part of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment alongside the standard method and other national planning guidance⁵. There is a range of other secondary sources and model-based approaches to determining true (effective) demand in line with the recommendations of the NPPG⁶. This includes:

- Building plot search websites and market enquiries
- Data from applications and pre-application enquiries

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments>

⁶ Housing Needs of Different Groups - Para 003 Ref ID: 67-003-20190722

- Basic assumptions modelling
 - Stratified demographic modelling
 - Community Land Trust networks and Housing enablers
 - Local Housing needs and neighbourhood planning surveys
50. **Market enquiry data from plot search and self build sites.** Custom Build Homes provides a demand appraisal/assessment for an area based on commercial plot search / self build registers. (<https://www.righttobuildregister.co.uk/data-tracked/>). The National Custom and Self Build Association (NaCSBA) can provide demand estimates for the planning authority area based on subscribers to magazines published by and events organised by their media members, and visitors to the National Self Build & Renovation Centre (contact info@nacsba.org.uk).
 51. **Data from applications and pre-application enquiries.** DM officers and administrators will be aware of numbers of aspirational self-builders who may have been discouraged or refused due to specific issues with a proposal. Data counts of such applications and pre-apps provides another measure of demand. **Planning Agents** and **Building Control** colleagues can provide estimates of the potential demand were adequate policy support and allocations were to be given.
 52. **Basic assumptions modelling.** Taking broad estimates, based on percentage of total assessed housing need, with 10% being the basic target and 15% as the target expressed at the time of the Housing and Planning Act 2016. Alternatively **Market Modelled based interest and ability to purchase** provides a further sense check. We know that people wishing to self build are unlikely to purchase a mass-market new build (volume build) home and that for these people buying a re-sale ‘fixer-upper’ to redevelop or demolish/rebuild is the only alternative (without planning support). So, a proxy for overall demand is to consider the average annual number of sales of resale detached or semi detached homes (not new build) and take 10% (minimum) of that as potential demand.
 53. **Stratified demographic modelling** Three Dragons in partnership with the Right to Build Task Force and NaCSBA has developed a *Demand Assessment Tool*, which can help identify demand for CSB. There are also other examples of such models in the market. An example can be found here: <https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/352413/custom-and-self-build-demand-assessment-2018.pdf>
 54. **Housing enablers** There are people in need of stable housing who cannot afford to buy on the market but who could build their way onto the housing ladder, often via “sweat equity” and building modest homes to suit modest budgets. Housing officers may be able to provide an indication of potential self-builders in this group. **Local Housing needs and neighbourhood planning surveys**
 55. Local estate agents are interested in selling existing properties and do not generally deal with or support growth in the self-build sector so are unlikely to provide helpful information.

Assessing Demand Checklist for SHMNAs

56. LPAs are advised to ensure that any policy and plan making is informed by robust assessment of demand. In particular LPAs should:

- ☐ Review past windfalls to establish proportion that meet self-build criteria (you can check the Land Registry to see if a home is sold within three years of completion – check not rental/second home, etc).
- ☐ Review all self build applications, including refused and withdrawn applications and pre-application enquiries, to quantify the demand from the most motivated group of self builders.
- ☐ For CIL, authorities review CSB exemptions specifically quantifying those that have provided both part 1 AND 2 self build exemptions (giving one measure of non-implementation).
- ☐ Review of Section 106/conditions to ensure CSB dwellings remain plots are being marketed or delivered as such.
- ☐ **Commissioning of any strategic or local housing needs assessment** should explicitly require that assessment of demand from people wishing to commission or build their own homes states a range of figures informed by:
 - Building plot search websites and market enquiries
 - Data from applications and pre-application enquiries
 - Basic assumptions modelling
 - Stratified demographic modelling
 - Community Land Trust networks and Housing enablers
 - Local Housing needs and neighbourhood planning surveys

Types, tenures, and locations

57. At present the majority of CSB developments are individual homes on single plots. Demand of this type is expected to remain strong and to remain the preferred choice for many (where such an option is available). In addition to individual plots, small developments of custom build homes are also popular, with village and smaller town communities generally accepting of CSB developments particularly where organic growth can be achieved on the edge of settlements. Experience with self build plots on newbuild estates shows there is strong demand (when marketed in good faith) and many self-builders, particularly younger families, wish to have a home close to neighbours, schools and services.
58. In planning positively for the future supply of CSB plots, LPAs should consider the type of plots preferred by people on the register. However, it is not the responsibility of the LPA to meet demand to type, only to meet the number of units reflected on the Register. It is however important that a range of opportunities are offered on large and small sites

providing diversity, and that planning policies positively encourage CSB windfall proposals in appropriate areas such as infill plots, locations on the edge of settlements and brownfield sites.

59. It is also noteworthy that the 'Letwin Review'⁷ confirmed that a lack of diversity of build types is at the heart of slow build rates on larger sites, it is therefore also important for larger housing schemes (500+ units) to provide for diversity, of which the provision for plots for CSB forms an important part.
60. As the NPPF makes clear, in Footnote 28 (NPPF Dec 25), CSB is a delivery mechanism for both market and affordable housing⁸. The task force guidance note [PG2.2 Provision of affordable housing including exception sites](#) provides additional pointers on this.

⁷ Independent Review of Build Out (2018); https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/752124/Letwin_review_web_version.pdf

⁸ See RTB Taskforce AN04 and PG2.2 for further guidance and advice on affordable custom and self build approaches.

7. POLICIES TO CREATE LAND SUPPLY

61. There are several different options for LPAs to support for the delivery of CSB opportunities through effective planning policies and the most effective approach is a mix of enabling policies and allocations. The types of policies to support CSB include:

- Housing Mix
- Criteria-based support/Exception sites
- Small site allocations/Large site allocations
- Percent Policies
- Neighbourhood Plan policies
- Council 'standing advice'

Policies expressing general support for policy-compliant self build with no specific decision-making consideration are effective and logically flawed – one cannot refuse a policy compliant proposal simply as it is self-commissioned.

62. The Right to Build Task Force advises against solely relying on percent policies on large majors as in practice there are long time delays in bringing plots to market, and the numbers of plots on large majors alone are unlikely to meet the true demand as evidence in Section 6 of this document.

Housing Mix

63. These are quite common with over a third of LPAs having a housing mix policy that references self/custom build. These policies rely on a good SHMNA with NPPG-compliant assessment of self build with ongoing monitoring and updates of local and strategic demand. This should include commitment to how dynamic demand will be assessed over plan period (not just register numbers) and monitored.

Example: Maidstone Local Plan Review (Adopted March 2024)

POLICY LPRSP10(A) – HOUSING MIX

1. *Maidstone Borough Council will seek to ensure the delivery of sustainable mixed communities across new housing developments and within existing housing areas throughout the borough.*
2. *In considering proposals for new housing development, the council will seek a sustainable range of house sizes, types and tenures (including plots for custom and self-build) that reflect the needs of those living in Maidstone Borough now and in years to come.*
3. *Accommodation profiles detailed in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2021 (or any future updates) will be used to help inform developers to determine which house sizes should be delivered in urban and rural areas to meet the objectively assessed needs of the area. In relation to affordable housing, the council will expect the submission of details of how this information has been used to justify the proposed mix.*

4. ...
5. *Major development will be expected to demonstrate that consideration has been given to serviced custom and self-build plots as part of housing mix in line with policy LPRHOU9.*

Criteria-based CSB 'exception sites'

64. Criteria-based support for individual and small CSB proposals is an effective way to support self build and create additionality in delivery. These are not affordable exception sites as set out in the NPPF whereby sites in the open countryside, which would not normally be used for housing, can still be considered appropriate for affordable housing. Rather, a CSB 'exception' policy may set out criteria to facilitate CSB housing in appropriate and sustainable locations, which may be contrary to policy for developer-led speculative housing. These policies also provide LPAs an opportunity to set out specific criteria to support higher environmental standards or help re-balance housing markets, for example supporting delivery of homes that are more in keeping with local needs and affordability
65. Common criteria referenced in such policies includes:
 - Proximity to settlement
 - Scale (Max size, e.g. linked to NDSS)
 - Proportionate to settlement size (in case of multi-plot or community led)
 - Principle residency
 - Environmental criteria
 - Affordable exceptions:
 - Discount market sale UU
 - Local connection clauses
 - Max income
66. For example, a site outside, but adjacent to, a settlement boundary may be considered as an appropriate location for a self-build dwelling, where it would normally be considered technically contrary to policy. Similarly, policy may support CSB development infill development where developer-led market housing would not be permitted. Such a policy creates a small number of opportunities for custom and self-builders in appropriate and sustainable locations, where they are not in competition with larger scale developers. These homes are likely to be built by small local builders, and typically to high levels of sustainability.
67. Wellingborough Borough Council's Plan for Wellingborough, for example, includes an exception site policy in which CSB dwellings in rural areas (ie open countryside) may be permitted should the applicant be able to demonstrate a local connection and that their need is unsatisfied by the local housing market:

PLAN FOR WELLINGBOROUGH

Policy H6 Single Plot Exception Sites for Self-build

Single plot affordable exception sites will be supported for self-build in the rural area provided that the proposal is in accordance with Policy 13 of the Joint Core Strategy and:

- a. the applicant is the prospective occupier of the proposed dwelling;*
- b. the applicant has a strong and evidenced local connection to the village;*
- c. the applicant has an identified housing need which cannot be met on the open market; and*
- d. The dwelling is built to the minimum nationally described space standards.*

Dwellings will have permitted development rights removed and future sale of the property will be controlled through a planning obligation to ensure that it remains as an affordable property for local people in perpetuity.

68. Mendip local plan's self build exception sites policy is focused on local needs housing as locally affordable.

MENDIP LOCAL PLAN PART II: SITES & POLICIES (Adopted 2022)

Policy DP24: Single-plot Exception Sites for Self & Custom-Build

As an exception to normal policy for the provision of housing set out in Core Policies 1 and 2, permission may be granted for single affordable self-build and custom build dwellings in locations adjoining rural settlements where the following criteria are met:

Eligibility:

- Applicants must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that they are in housing need and are unable to identify or afford a suitable alternative home currently available for sale on the open market in the local area or within 5km of the proposed site (excluding major settlements). Applicants must also demonstrate a strong local connection to the settlement.*

Housing need is demonstrated where the household unit has no independent home of its own, or is renting and would like to become an owner-occupier, or occupies accommodation deemed by the Council to be unsuitable for either their current or reasonably foreseeable future needs for some other reason.

Location:

- Exception sites must be demonstrably part of, or adjacent to, a recognisable named settlement. It does not apply to the main towns. Sites that do not lie in a settlement, constituting isolated or sporadic development, or which would adversely affect an AONB, landscape character, local historic or rural*

character (for example due to an elevated, exposed or other prominent position) are not considered acceptable.

Design and Scale:

- *The dwelling size will not normally be permitted to exceed 140 square metre gross internal floor space or occupy a plot of more than 0.1ha.*
- *Development must be in harmony with the character of the area, of a suitable design which is appropriate to its location.*

Future Occupation

To ensure community benefit going forward, appropriate mechanisms must be in place to ensure dwellings remain affordable in perpetuity.

All sites will be assessed on an individual basis and be subject to the same considerations as other developments with regard to access, sustainable design, ecological networks, greenbelt and mitigation for effects on protected sites – including phosphates etc.

Allocation of sites specifically for CSB

69. The LPA has within its gift to allocate sites specifically for CSB. Such sites would normally be at the smaller end of the spectrum (5 – 30 homes perhaps), although there are examples of major sites specifically for CSB being successful.
70. The allocation of specific sites has a number of advantages. LPAs can identify sites that are particularly appropriate for CSB during the plan-making process. Those that wish to build or commission their own home should be offered reasonable levels of choice so that smaller and medium-sized sites are available as well as plots on larger housing schemes.
71. The emerging Stratford Site Allocations Plan is very progressive in this respect and identifies 11 sites for allocation as CSB sites:

STRATFORD PROPOSED SUBMISSION SITE ALLOCATIONS PLAN (JULY 2019)

Policy SAP.4 Self-build and Custom-build Housing Allocations

The following sites have been allocated for the specific purpose of contributing to meeting the self-build and custom housebuilding needs of Stratford-on-Avon District:

- *North of Allimore Lane, Alcester for approximately 15 plots (Proposal SCB.1)*
- *East of Shipston Road, Alderminster for approximately 15 plots (Proposal SCB.2)*
- *South of Church Street, Hampton Lucy for approximately 10 plots (Proposal SCB.3)*
- *West of Bush Heath Lane, Harbury for approximately 10 plots (Proposal SCB.4)*
- *North of Collingham Lane, Long Itchington for approximately 10 plots (Proposal SCB.5)*
- *North of Dog Lane, Napton-on-the-Hill for approximately 5 plots (Proposal SCB.6)*
- *West of Coventry Road, Southam for approximately 10 plots (Proposal SCB.7)*
- *West of Jubilee Fields⁴, Stockton for approximately 15 plots (Proposal SCB.8)*
- *North of Millers Close, Welford-on-Avon for approximately 10 plots (Proposal SCB.9)*

The boundaries of the sites are shown in Part B in Section 8 Policies Map.

All schemes will be subject to a legal agreement requiring all plots to be offered in the first instance to individuals or households that have a local connection through living and/or working in Stratford-on-Avon District or by having close family living in the District.

A marketing strategy will need to be agreed which specifies the minimum length of time for advertising plots, the appropriate means of doing so, and based on an independent valuation.

To ensure a high-quality development and provide certainty to the local community, the applicant, working with Stratford-on-Avon District Council and the relevant parish council, will be expected to prepare a Design Code or Plot Passports for the site. These will be approved by the District Council and form part of the planning permission for the site.

Percentage-based policies on larger sites

72. Councils may choose to include policies to deliver a proportion of CSB plots through the requirement to provide a percentage of serviced plots, normally on larger sites. CSB on larger sites brings many benefits to such a site. These include de-risking development, early cash flow benefits and a more rapid return on investment, as well as providing homes that enhance the development and attract other buyers onto the site. There are more than 40 LPAs with local plans containing these “percent site” policies. These are

positive in relation to diversifying housing delivery, but do not represent additionality in housing delivery as they are re-distribution of major/volume housebuilding.

73. Percentage based policies on larger sites are an appropriate way of bringing a number of CSB plots within such sites, particularly within new garden settlements or very large major allocation or strategic sites. CSB has particular benefits for and affinity with the early stages of developments of new garden communities, as CSB can be specifically planned into a phasing and allocation strategy. This ensures that an even distribution of housing types and sizes can be identified, including an early provision of CSB in the first tranche of any phasing.
74. The threshold at which a site is considered large enough to deliver CSB plots as a percentage of the overall site requires judgement. For example 5% of plots on a 20 dwelling development is just 1 dwelling. There are developments where this has successfully created a single plot, though delivering just one plot may create disproportionate overhead in negotiating and monitoring agreements. There are cases where an LPA and developer agreed an off-site contribution to fund self-build plots or self build officer resources where there is a single plot available.
75. Wellingborough Borough Council's adopted policy is typical of these percent site policies, in this case using a scheme size threshold for inclusion of CSB. Policy H5 of the Plan for Wellingborough requires 5% on all sites of 50 dwellings or more. In Local Plan consultations large housebuilders will likely make a response stating that such policies are not justified, however evidence of demand assessed as noted in Section 6 will clarify that such policies are justified.

PLAN FOR WELLINGBOROUGH - Adopted

Policy H 5 Self-build and Custom Housebuilding

On sites of 50 or more dwellings or 1.4ha or more site area, the local planning authority will seek the provision of 5% of the plots to be made available as self-build or custom build plots. The provision will take account of:

- a. evidence of local need;*
- b. the nature of the development proposed; and*
- c. the viability of the development.*

Serviced building plots which have been appropriately marketed at a prevailing market value and which have not been sold after six months can be built out by the developer.

76. Provision of CSB plots within larger sites should be informed by evidence of site-specific demand. This will inform which types of CSB are most appropriate and will provide confidence to the local authority and developers that there is sufficient market interest. Site-specific demand questionnaires and engagement events can inform master planning of such sites.

77. A marketing strategy should be agreed as part of the application process and this should specifically reference phasing and trigger points for bringing self build parcels or plots to market. Cascade mechanisms where a developer's marketing approach is unsuccessful can be tailored to the local circumstances of each LPA and demand; however, it will be important to determine what should be incorporated within such a mechanism. The Right to Build Task Force advice note on securing [delivery PG3.8: Securing custom and self build using obligations](#) provides detailed advice.
78. Plots delivered as affordable housing or by the council in line with the emerging Right to Build may be offered on a first refusal basis to local residents on the council's self-build Register (subject to regulations).
79. There are also opportunities to incorporate the requirement of marketing strategies within LPA's Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs), such as [Teignbridge District Council](#) and the South Gloucestershire SPD. It is recognised that, dependent upon local conditions, on occasions the sale of plots may not deliver the same absolute level of financial return for a housing developer as the speculative build out of homes. However, limited allocations are unlikely to significantly impact viability of sites given that CSB normally forms a small percentage of the total units provided and given that CSB plots realise a return much quicker than standard housing which can help with overall cash flow.

Neighbourhood Development Plans

80. Neighbourhood Development Plans (NDPs) offer a great opportunity for local groups to accurately assess demand within a NDP area and to make provisions for the demand they identify.
81. As such, it is considered that LPAs should actively encourage NDP groups to assess demand and seek to meet the demand via allocations or policies within the NDP. NDPs are helpful in assessing local demand (ie on a ward by ward basis) as NDP Groups have the ability to carry out Housing Needs Surveys (HNS). A HNS provides the NDP Group and the LPA with detailed information relating to CSB demand. Where an LPA has a number of NDP Groups producing NDPs they are able to gain useful indicative evidence of demand for CSB across the district.
82. LPAs should draw up guidance to be offered to NDP Steering Groups, encouraging them to meet the needs of those wishing to build their own home. The Right to Build Task Force [PG2.6 Neighbourhood plans](#) and the process guidance note provides additional information.

Council 'standing advice'

83. Where the Local Plan process is in early stages, or need is identified for policy and practice clarification, the LPA can adopt non-statutory Planning Advice policies and guidance. Provided that this has been duly considered by a committee of the Planning Authority and adopted as policy then this will have effect and be a material consideration in

decision making. This can be a powerful enabling tool to bring forward small scale developments which can add to the overall housing land supply.

8. DELIVERY

84. Development models for custom build and self-build fall into several categories, in terms of who is initiating or promoting the model, whether the ‘customer’ is an individual or group of individuals, how the plots will come forward and the form of tenure proposed. The Right to Build Task Force advice note on securing [delivery PG3.8: Securing custom and self build using obligations](#) and conditions contains helpful information managing CSB applications and development to ensure delivery.
85. In managing applications and developments it is useful to consider the nature of the proposal. The table below summarises the different models of delivery. All these can be adapted to suit a particular context, and at a variety of densities. It should never be assumed that CSB housing will only deliver housing comprising detached houses on large plots at a low density.

Public or private sector led
- Public Sector Led Development – local authority, housing association/registered provider, or other public sector body initiating or promoting an opportunity, either: - Directly through the development of land in their ownership, although this may be delivered with a third party; or - By imposing a requirement for CSB housing through the planning process. - Private Sector – landowner, developer, or individual/group of individuals.
Individual or Group
- Individual Commissioning generally a single household looking to secure a private home. - Group Self Build - Private groups of individuals, charitable foundations, Community Land Trusts/co-ops, housing associations/ registered providers or custom build developers working independently or with a third party to identify, secure and build-out an opportunity; or - Project promoter identifying the demand for a group opportunity, possibly through the council’s Right to Build Register, allocating land and marketing the opportunity. They may also, possibly working with the local authority, help groups to form, become constituted and appoint advisers to develop proposals, assess these proposals against key criteria and sell site(s) to the most robust and viable groups.
How plots come forward
- Land – the provision of land only, with or without planning permission. - Land and services – the provision of land with some infrastructure and services work undertaken to provide either a serviced parcel/site or serviced plots. - Land and works – the provision of land with infrastructure and services in place to plots and some element of construction work undertaken on the plot, whether ‘Golden Brick’ works, shell or a finished ‘turnkey’ home to suit the customer’s needs.

Form of Tenure

- Market housing – models looking to achieve a full market price for the product provided, ie no subsidy or discount involved. However, some consideration may be given to pricing these products to allow more ‘hands-on’ self-builders to establish some equity from ‘day-one’.
- Affordable housing – models requiring some form of discount, subsidy or equity/land ownership being held by a third party in perpetuity secured through a Section 106 agreement, this may include:
 - Affordable housing for rent, usually developed in partnership with a registered provider and secured in perpetuity.
 - Affordable home ownership products including shared ownership/equity, discount market sale and starter homes.
 - Community-led projects such as community land trusts, co-housing or co-operative housing groups or associations of individuals who are a community benefit society, where such housing is restricted from being sold at market value.

86. The NPPG sets out how relevant authorities can play a key role in brokering and facilitating relationships to help bring suitable land forward, including:
- a. *supporting Neighbourhood Planning groups where they choose to include self-build and custom build housing policies in their plans.*
 - b. *effective joint working across service delivery areas and with local delivery partners including Housing Associations, Arms Length Management Organisations, and housing developers.*
 - c. *using their own land (if available and suitable) for self-build and custom housebuilding and marketing it to those on the register.*
 - d. *working with Homes England to unlock land and sites in wider public ownership to deliver self-build and custom build housing.*
 - e. *when engaging with developers and landowners who own sites that are suitable for housing and encouraging them to consider self-build and custom housebuilding and facilitating access to those on the register where the landowner is interested.*
 - f. *working with local partners, such as Housing Associations and third sector groups, to custom build affordable housing for veterans and other groups in acute housing need.*

APPENDIX 1 – FURTHER EXAMPLES OF CSB POLICIES

Local Authority	City of York Council
Summary of Policy Approach	Percentage of large sites policy. Emerging Local Plan would support CSB schemes and require 5% of strategic sites to be delivered as serviced self-build plots.
Extract of Policy	Policy H 4: Promoting Self and Custom House Building As part of meeting housing need, proposals for self- and custom housebuilding, to be occupied as homes by those individuals, will be supported where they are in conformity with all other relevant local and national policies. On strategic sites (sites 5ha and above) developers will be required to supply at least 5% of dwelling plots for sale to self-builders or to small or custom housebuilders subject to appropriate demand being identified. Plots should be made available at competitive rates, to be agreed through Section 106 agreements, which are fairly related to the associated site/plot costs. In determining the nature and scale of provision the Council will have regard to viability considerations and site-specific circumstances. These schemes will: • be individually designed, employing innovative approaches throughout that cater for changing lifetime needs; • provide for appropriate linkages to infrastructure and day-to-day facilities; and • include a design framework to inform detailed design of the individual units where more than one self- or custom build unit is proposed. Where a developer is required to provide self- and custom build plots the plots should be made available and marketed for at least 12 months. Where plots have been appropriately marketed and have not sold within this time period these plots may be built out as conventional plots for market housing by the developer. Communities preparing Neighbourhood Plans will be encouraged to consider the identification of sites for self and custom build projects within their neighbourhood plan area.
Examination/ Inspector's Report Comments	In the process of Examination by Independent Planning Inspectors following Submission of the Local Plan –Main Modifications consulted on in summer 2019.
https://www.york.gov.uk/planning-policy/new-local-plan/1	

Local Authority	Guildford Borough Council
Summary of Policy Approach	Percentage of large sites policy. Adopted Local Plan supports CSB schemes and requires 5% of large sites (100+) to be delivered as serviced self-build plots.
Extract of Policy	POLICY H1: Homes for all Self-build and custom housebuilding Self-build and custom housebuilding will be supported if the proposed development has no adverse effect on the local character. On development sites of 100 homes or more 5% of the total homes shall be available for sale as self-build and custom housebuilding plots whilst there is an identified need. For phased development, self-build plots must be delivered and serviced at the earliest stage possible. Self-build and custom housebuilding plots are encouraged on smaller residential development sites. Self-build plots made available must respond to the sizes identified on the register. Plots must be made available and priced and marketed appropriately as self-build or custom build plots for at least 18 months.
Examination/ Inspector's Report Comments	Adopted.
https://www.guildford.gov.uk/media/29891/The-Guildford-borough-Local-Plan-strategy-and-sites-2015-2034-/pdf/Guildford_Borough_Local_Plan_2015-2034.pdf	

Local Authority	West Oxfordshire Council
Summary of Policy Approach	Percentage of large sites policy. Adopted Local Plan requires 5% of large sites (100+) to be delivered as serviced self-build plots (or equivalent number of plots off-site).
Extract of Policy	POLICY H5: Custom and self-build housing In order to address the need for custom and self-build housing, the Council will require all housing developments of 100 or more dwellings to include 5% of the residential plots to be serviced and made available for this purpose. This can include the partial completion of units to be made available for self-finish.

	As an alternative, the developer may provide serviced land for an equivalent number of custom and self-build plots in another suitable, sustainable location. If any of the serviced plots or units offered for custom, self-build or self-finish remain unsold after 12 months marketing, they may be built out by the developer. Only where it can be robustly demonstrated that the provision of on-site plots is unviable or cannot be achieved for some other reason and the developer is unable to make off-site provision will the Council waive the 5% requirement. All schemes will be considered in accordance with the Council's custom and self-build Design Code. The Council will generally control access to custom and self-build housing schemes by establishing and maintaining a Register of Interest of those who wish to become custom builders and meet relevant criteria. Elsewhere, proposals for custom and self-build housing will be approved in suitable, sustainable locations subject to compliance with other relevant policies of this plan including Policies OS2, H2 and E3.
Examination/ Inspector's Comments	Report Adopted
https://westoxon.gov.uk/media/feyjmpen/local-plan.pdf	

Local Authority	Central Bedfordshire Council
Summary of Policy Approach	Package of measures including percentage of large sites policy requiring up to 20% of plots on sites over 100 units to be delivered as self-build plots, support for small-scale CSB proposals and potential for CSB opportunities to be delivered on rural exception sites
Extract of Policy	Policy H7: Self and Custom Build Housing The Council will support applications for delivery of serviced plots in suitable locations where they help meet the demand as demonstrated by the Council's Self and Custom Build Register. The Council will require sites of 10 or more dwellings (excluding schemes for 100% flats or conversions) to provide serviced plots to meet demand evidenced by the Register. Up to 20% of the

	dwelling capacity of these qualifying sites will be required to be delivered as serviced plots. Applications that deliver a higher proportion will be considered favourably. • The Council will consider favourably applications for the delivery of serviced plots on sites of less than 10 dwellings. • The Council will require developers to enter into a Section 106 agreement that will cover issues including timescales and phasing of serviced plots delivery, appropriate marketing of these plots to self- and custom builders and length of time after which unsold plots will be returned to the developer. • The Council will require all serviced plots to have or provide within a specified period (agreed in a Section 106 agreement) access to a public highway, connections for electricity, water and wastewater, and gas where present in the area. • Developments meeting the Council's threshold for affordable housing will be expected to deliver either on site affordable housing or payment of commuted sums for off-site delivery in line with the Council's adopted policy. • Delivery of serviced plots on rural exception sites will be allowed in strict accordance with Policy H5 as part of the limited number of market dwellings permitted to enable the delivery of affordable houses.
Examination/ Inspector's Comments	Report Examination underway as of October 2020.
https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/localplan	

Local Authority	Torbay Council
Summary of Policy Approach	Percentage of large sites policy. Adopted Local Plan requires 5% of large sites (100+) to be delivered as serviced self-build plots (or equivalent number of plots off-site).
Extract of Policy	Policy H3 Self-build affordable housing and exception sites To accommodate demand for self-build homes, the provision of at least 5% of dwelling plots for sale to self-builders will be sought as an element of affordable

	housing provision identified in Policy H2, on sites of 30 dwellings or more. This will be controlled by the following means: 1. The provision of serviced plots in an agreed location will be set out through a Section 106 Planning Obligation; 2. 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 affordable self-build or be offered to the Council or a Housing Association for a further six months, before being disposed of by the developer as open market housing; and 3. Planning permissions should include conditions requiring self-build developments to be completed within 3 years of a self-builder purchasing a plot.
Examination/ Inspector's Report Comments	Adopted.
Hyperlink	2012to2030torbaylocalplanweb18may16.pdf

Local Authority	Shropshire
Summary of Policy Approach	The Shropshire Site Allocations and Management of Development (SAMDev) Plan was adopted in December 2015.
Extract of Policy	Council positively encourages local people to build their own affordable home to meet their own housing needs, as 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 the property will be capped at 60% by a Section 106 agreement, size is restricted to 100 square metres gross internal floor area and the home must be of good design and Code 3 level construction. Permitted Development Rights are withdrawn.

Examination/ Inspector's Report Comments	No comments.
Hyperlink	https://www.shropshire.gov.uk/self-build-homes/single-plot-exception-site-policy/

Local Authority	South Gloucestershire
Summary of Policy Approach	Policies, Sites and Places (PSP) Plan Adopted November 2017. The Plan sets out a positive policy and asks landowners to come forward with sites.
Extract of Policy	Policy PSP42 – Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding When considering such proposal(s) for self- and custom build dwellings, the Council will take a positive approach. With particular respect to self- and custom build schemes of more than 10 dwellings in urban areas and five dwellings in rural areas, the Council will work proactively with applicants to find solutions to enable the viable delivery of custom build housing. In doing so the Council will maintain a register for prospective self- and custom housebuilders and have regard to the register in its decision-making, plan-making, housing and regeneration functions. The Council will also: 1. Seek to bring forward land for custom build dwellings through the review of the Local Plan (to be completed in 2018); 2. Investigate opportunities for custom build dwellings on Council owned land as and when it becomes available for redevelopment or disposal; 3. Encourage developers to provide serviced custom build plots on residential development sites of over 10 dwellings; 4. Require developers to supply at least 5% of the total dwellings on residential and mixed-use sites of over 100 dwellings, for sale to self and custom builders on the following sequential basis:

	Firstly, A) As self- and/or custom house building serviced plots (that meet the definition of self-build and custom housebuilding plots within the Housing and Planning Act 2016 as amended or any subsequent amendment). Secondly, Where it is demonstrated that it was not possible to deliver the self-build and/or custom housebuilding plots in accordance with A) above: B) as shell homes - Require the developer to investigate whether it is viable to provide self- and custom build plots on sites where the Council has agreed it is unviable to provide policy compliant Section 106 contributions (including affordable housing), if the affordable housing is consequently reduced to below 35% of the total dwellings and subsidy is not available to return the affordable housing to 35% of the total dwellings. The number of self- and custom build plots (to be investigated) should be up to the equivalent in number of the difference in provision of affordable housing being provided and the 35% target affordable housing amount; - In respect of Core Strategy Policy CS13 – Non-Safeguarded Economic Development Sites, will prioritise the provision of self- and custom build dwellings, ahead of mainstream developer models of housing delivery; - In respect of Core Strategy Policy CS19 – Rural Housing Exception Sites, require providers to investigate the provision of self- and custom build housing as all and or part of the market housing allowance; - Encourage local communities to provide land for self- and custom builders through Neighbourhood Planning; and - Where custom build plots are provided under criteria 2, 4 and 5 of this policy, will expect dwellings to be no larger than 108 sqm (gross internal floor space).
Examination/ Inspector's Report Comments	Inspector's Report considered the above policy in some detail and set out a Main Modifications to implement the tiered approach to provide flexibility in the policy to allow for custom and self-build homes and shell homes, with both types being required ahead of developer standard product.

<https://www.southglos.gov.uk/environment-and-planning/planning/planning-policy/planning-local-plans/policies-sites-and-places-dpd/>

Local Authority	Teignbridge District Council
Summary of Policy Approach	The Teignbridge Local Plan was adopted in May 2014 and was the first Council in England to adopt a policy on self-build homes, known as the 'Teignbridge Rule'. The Council has also adopted a bespoke SPD which provides further guidance on applying the policy.
Extract of Policy	WE7 Custom Build Dwellings To support prospective custom builders on sites of more than 20 dwellings developers will supply at least 5% of dwelling plots for sale to custom builders, which will be controlled by the following means: a) The Council may seek developments of more than 10 custom build dwellings in a single site location to be developed in accordance with an agreed design code; b) Planning permissions should include conditions requiring custom build developments to be completed within three years of a custom builder purchasing a plot; and c) 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.
Examination/ Inspector's Report Comments	Inspector's Report does not comment on Policy WE7 except to note that it will help widen choice in the housing market.
https://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/media/1669/local-plan-2013-33.pdf https://www.teignbridge.gov.uk/media/4974/custom-and-self-build-housing-july-2016.pdf	