

Assessing demand for custom and self-build housing

Custom and self-build housing is rapidly growing in importance in the UK. Its development helps to speed up housing delivery locally and adds to the diversity of new housing. Local planners now have a responsibility to plan positively for this type of housing.



A diverse housing supply: custom build homes in the Netherlands

Supported by law

Government recognises the benefits of custom and self-build housing and has introduced measures to support its expansion. Legislation* has placed duties on local authorities, to:

- prepare, publicise and maintain a Register of individuals and associations of individuals “*who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land*”;
- take the Register into account “*when carrying out their planning, housing, land disposal and regeneration functions*”; and
- give permissions for enough serviced plots of land to meet the demand for custom and self-build house building in their area.

* *The Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 and the Housing and Planning Act 2016*



Tresham Garden Village Masterplan by Charlton Brown Architects - local plans and new settlements can ensure the provision of custom & self-build plots

Why assess this demand?

Local authorities need to know how much custom and self-build housing to plan for, to meet the need for this type of housing.

Positive planning for custom and self-build housing also encourages local distinctiveness in design and can support small and medium sized builders to take advantage of a wider range of customers.

The statutory Registers are an invaluable snapshot of demand but are less useful in informing longer-term site allocation and local plan policies.

The National Planning Policy Framework asks local planning authorities to assess housing demand for different groups in the community, including people wishing to commission or build their own homes, and to use their local plans to meet that demand.

Planning Practice Guidance supports the use of secondary data to inform this process, including the use of demand assessment tools.

The evolution of custom and self-build housing

When it comes to home ownership, custom and self-build housing offers a more affordable and personalised option. It is also a route for community groups to work together to provide their own homes.

While some custom and self-builders engage in DIY, or co-ordinate trades themselves, many use the ‘design & build’ route of commissioning a contractor to build their home, others may buy a shell or part-finished home, completing the fit-out themselves.

The custom and self-build demand model

The custom and self-build demand model provides reliable longer-term demand forecasts. The model has been developed by Three Dragons, with support from the Right to Build Task Force, and has been used already to provide evidence for a number of local authorities in preparing their local plans.

What the model does

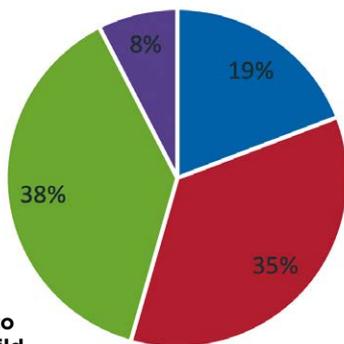
The demand model makes use of the best and most up to date local and national data to provide information about the:

- overall demand for custom and self-build housing across a local authority or housing market area or large-scale sites;
- demand for different types and sizes of building plots;
- demand from households unable to afford full market prices.

The model takes into account local demographic trends and local affordability for custom and self-build.

Outputs are summarised in a report, covering:

- national and local policy;
- information from the Register and current patterns of supply (typically from single plots);
- findings from the model together with recommendations for action and steps that can be taken to meet this demand.



Breakdown of households in NETown likely to custom/self-build by household type.

■ Single ■ Couple ■ Family with children ■ Other

HOW THE DEMAND MODEL WORKS...



Produced by THREE DRAGONS

Three Dragons specialises in housing development, planning research, policy-making and the delivery of custom and self-build housing – visit www.three-dragons.co.uk. To find out about the custom and self-build demand model email laura.easton@three-dragons.co.uk

Supported by

THE RIGHT TO BUILD TASK FORCE

The Right to Build Task Force supports a range of stakeholders, including local authorities, as they deliver custom and self-build housing, with an emphasis on affordability and scale. Visit www.righttobuild.org.uk or email bryony@righttobuild.org.uk for more.

