



A message from Rob Brighthouse, Chair of the New Homes Quality Board...

Welcome to our Spring newsletter. In this issue, we will provide you with updates on recent developments and our plans for the months ahead.

First of all, I am pleased to advise that, following the latest activations, over 50% of all new homes sold in England, Scotland and Wales are now protected by the New Homes Quality Code (NHQC).

Together we are helping to deliver a step change in the quality of new homes and customer service provided by developers, as around 55% of all new home buyers now receive enhanced protection delivered by those developers operating under the Code. And, of course, this also gives the opportunity for any unresolved issues to be addressed through a referral to the independent New Homes Ombudsman Service.

As many of you are aware, the recent reports from the **Competition and Markets Authority (CMA)** and the **Chartered Institute of Building (CIOB)** have shed light on some ongoing concerns within our sector. While these reports have outlined a number of recommendations, both highlighted the crucial need for a single, mandatory code and a clear route of redress for consumers. The CMA went further to say:

“The NHQB and its work could act as a base from which the UK government, in consultation with the Scottish and Welsh governments, could take forward our recommendations.”
CMA, [Housebuilding market study final report, 2024.](#)

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Parliamentary Roundtable ‘Building Consumer Confidence in New Homes’ [left to right] Natalie Elphicke MP and DLUHC Committee Member. Ian Byrne MP and DLUHC Committee Member. Emma Toms, Chief Executive, NHQB. Rob Brighthouse, Chair, NHQB. Lord Best from the House of Lords.

CHAIR'S MESSAGE

This sentiment was also echoed in our successful parliamentary roundtable event, chaired by Lord Best on 6 March, where attendees unanimously agreed with the need for a single mandatory code and route for consumer redress, through the evolution of the New Homes Quality Code (NHQC) and New Homes Ombudsman Service (NHOS).

Looking ahead, the newly formed independent Code Council will draw upon the recommendations from the CMA and CIOB reports in the upcoming review of the NHQC. While the Code Council's review is set for release later this year and may bring updates to our framework, it provides an opportunity for key stakeholders from consumer groups and industry to assess the Code's current effectiveness and identify areas for evolution and growth. It makes sure the NHQC is fit for purpose, now and in the future, for all types of developers nationwide.

Developers registered with the NHQB have already shown exceptional commitment and we are delighted to see them beginning their online self-assessment to measure their compliance with the Code. Over the coming months, we will be conducting on-site audits as part of our comprehensive audit programme to support compliance with the Code and identify areas where developers may need support.

We anticipate further progress as we continue to drive higher standards within the industry. The first Consumer Guide on Snagging and the second Developer Learning Report on Complaints Management are planned for publication within the next few months.

With over half of the new homes market now actively embracing our framework, we are witnessing a tangible shift in commitment towards enhanced quality and accountability in our sector. I extend my thanks to all our stakeholders for their commitment to positive change.



Rob Brighthouse, Chair of the New Homes Quality Board

First review of the New Homes Quality Code

The first meeting of the independent Code Council to review the New Homes Quality Code took place in March. It is the first official review of the Code since it was launched in 2022.



The review is being led by the Code Council's independent Chair, Lewis Shand Smith and also includes representatives from the NHOS, consumer bodies, developers, conveyancers and warranty providers.

We value your feedback!

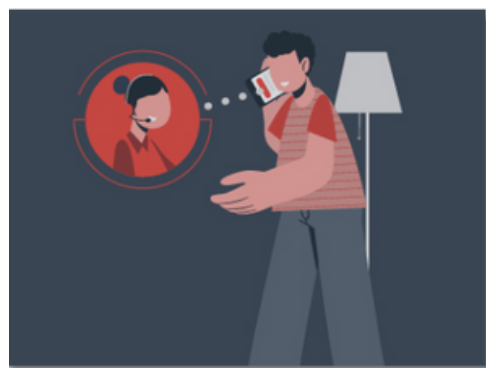
We will soon open a consultation where all stakeholders can provide their feedback and suggestions to improve the Code. This consultation will provide an opportunity for our stakeholders to contribute, whether by clarifying existing wording or suggesting new areas that are not currently included in the Code.

If you have any feedback on the current Code or would like to suggest something you think is missing from our framework, please email developers@nhqb.org.uk.

Publication of customer satisfaction results

One of the recommendations from the CMA's Housebuilding Market Study is that developers should take part in a customer satisfaction survey (CSS) and publish the key findings for consumers.

We are engaging with HBF, NHBC and Premier Guarantee to take the data from the existing National New Homes CSS, and publish it on our website to give customers a better insight into the service provided by different companies.



We are currently working on the data sharing arrangements to make this possible and expect to publish later this year. The specific results to be published have not yet been finalised but will include questions from both the 8-week and 9-month surveys.

We will be in touch with developers as soon as the details are confirmed and results will only be shared for those developers that are fully activated with the NHQB. If you have any questions in the meantime, please email developers@nhqb.org.uk.

Resounding 'yes' for Code and Ombudsman to become statutory at Parliamentary Roundtable

Attendees at the Parliamentary Roundtable event, 'Building Consumer Confidence in New Homes' held in March, unanimously voiced their support for making the New Homes Quality Code (NHQC) and the New Homes Ombudsman Service (NHOS) statutory.

Chaired by Lord Best, the event brought together MPs from across the political spectrum and key industry leaders, including representatives from developers, the Chartered Institute of Housing, Chartered Institute of Building, Competition and Markets Authority, and Home Builders Federation.



Parliamentarians, developers and other stakeholders at the Parliamentary Roundtable 'Building Consumer Confidence in New Homes' held on 6 March.

Throughout the discussion, the need for all developers to commit to the NHQC and for consumers to have a single route to redress were highlighted as the most effective way to improve the quality of new homes and consumer protection.

[Read the full article](#)

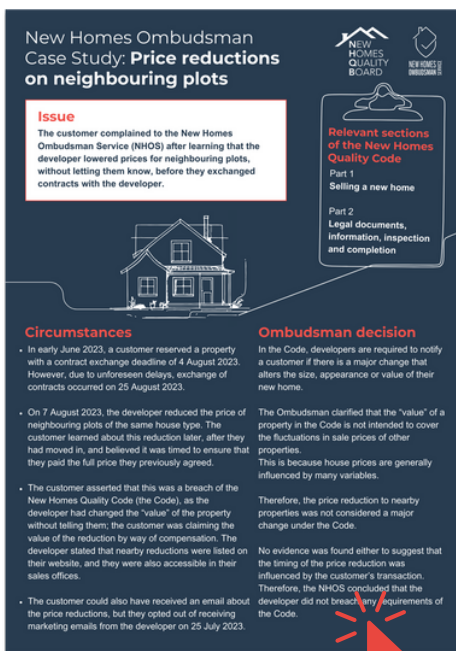
How will the on-site audits impact you?

Following the launch of self-assessment audits in June 2023, we are in the process of introducing on-site audits. The on-site audit programme will measure compliance with the New Homes Quality Code (NHQC) and identify areas for improvement within development sales centres.

A random selection of developments will be selected for a visit to assess compliance with the Code, and developments that have been selected for on-site audits will be contacted directly by the auditor in advance to arrange an appointment. The audit should last approximately 30 to 40 minutes, and will focus on assessing the knowledge required for typical sales appointments and processes set out in the NHQC.

After completing the audit, we will communicate the results to each developer, along with any necessary actions, within 30 days. For further information or queries, please email compliance@nhqb.org.uk.





NHOS Complaints Case Studies now available on NHQB website

In addition to sending out Developer Alerts about new complaint case studies, we have also made them available on our website.

[Visit the NHQB's Complaint Case Studies page here](#)

Since receiving the first complaint in June 2023, the New Homes Ombudsman:

- is handling **c400-500** enquiries a month
- has issued a final decision on **13** cases
- has resolved **14** cases informally, with negotiation or mediation
- has **46** cases currently under open investigation.

TEAM UPDATE

Emma Toms appointed Chief Executive of NHQB

Emma Toms has been appointed as Chief Executive of the New Homes Quality Board (NHQB) with effect from 1 March 2024.

Emma joined the NHQB as a consultant in 2021, helping to set up the organisation and was promoted to Chief Operating Officer in 2022. Emma brings a wealth of experience from her leadership roles in various industries including housebuilding, automotive, and rail.



Amy Wright to join as Operations Director

Amy Wright has been appointed Operations Director. She will be joining the NHQB team in June from Gleeson Homes, where she is currently Group Head of Customer Relations.

Amy will be the first point of contact for developers, while overseeing systems, processes and ensuring we remain on track to meet our strategic goals. We welcome Amy to the NHQB team and look forward to the positive impact she will have.



Who to talk to when you need help?



Compliance and audits:

compliance@nhqb.org.uk

If you need assistance with compliance and audits.



Technical support:

developers@nhqb.org.uk

For questions about registration, clarification on the New Homes Quality Code, or assistance with IT-related matters.



Finance questions:

finance@nhqb.org.uk

Such as fees, payments or invoices, our finance department can provide clarity on any financial aspect of your involvement with NHQB.



Communications:

communications@nhqb.org.uk

When it comes to communication materials or press releases, our communications team is here to assist you.



General queries:

info@nhqb.org.uk

For general queries about the NHQB.



New Homes Ombudsman Service:

customer.services@nhos.org.uk

The NHOS is available to address any queries regarding the complaints process or the outcomes of previous complaints.