



Chairman's Update: a message from Rob Brighthouse, New Homes Quality Board

In our first full year of operation, we have worked hard to change the way people see new homes. Our mission to raise standards across the industry has been put to the test, and we're proud to say we have made significant progress.

Through our initiatives with developers, policymakers, and regulatory bodies nationwide, we have raised the bar for standards and rolled them out in every nation of the UK. Every home built and sold under the New Homes Quality Code (NHQC) follows a first-class quality and customer service standard, regardless of the area or price point in which they are built.

This wouldn't be possible without the dedication and commitment of Registered Developers. Through our training, audits, and learning documents introduced this year, developers have wholeheartedly embraced the Code. They now view our framework not as an obligation, but as an opportunity for growth, consistency, and long-term customer relationships. In a market where trust is valued so highly by customers, potential homeowners are recognising the competitive advantage offered by developers registered with the NHQB. Customers know that a developer who follows the NHQC takes full responsibility if and when things go wrong and keeps their promises; that's why the New Homes Ombudsman has yet to fully uphold a single complaint against a developer.

Our commitment to excellence is evident not only in developer behaviour but also in our achievements. This year, we successfully reached our target of covering 80% of all new homes built in the UK once all developers activate their registrations. We have recently published research into consumer expectations of 'snagging' and launched our code compliance framework...

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which demonstrates over 90% compliance with the stringent requirements of the NHQC. Since the summer, we have launched an Industry Panel and a Scottish Advisory Group to further engage with developers and other stakeholders. The New Homes Ombudsman has ruled on the first complaints, and we have published case studies including learnings and best practice to help drive improvements across the sector. Finally, just last month we extended the framework for customers buying a new home in Northern Ireland.

We recognise that our work is far from over, especially with politicians from across the political spectrum putting housing at the centre of their plans. The New Homes Quality Board's presence at party conferences and fringe events has helped us to engage with policymakers and support SME developers by providing a voice in arenas where they might otherwise not be heard. Our collaboration with policymakers has established us as a key player in the dialogue on new homes, a role we embrace with responsibility and enthusiasm. Looking ahead to next year, which will mark the first formal review of the NHQC, we see an appropriate time to refine our practices and reaffirm our commitment to industry-leading standards.

I would also like to use this update to pay tribute to Leon Livermore's contribution to the NHQB. Having joined in early 2022, Leon our CEO has decided to move on at the end of the year to pursue other opportunities. I would like to thank Leon for his contribution in setting up the team, working with the board to get us to this point and building up our relationships with consumer groups, industry and government. Emma Toms, currently COO, will take on the role as Interim CEO to ensure consistency and momentum are maintained.

In closing, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to both developers and other stakeholders for their unwavering dedication and support. It is through your collective efforts that we have been able to shape what quality new homes should look like, and shift customer mindsets towards the housebuilding industry.

Wishing you all a happy holiday season and a successful New Year.



New Homes Quality Code extended to Northern Ireland

The New Homes Quality Board (NHQB) has officially launched the New Homes Quality Code in Northern Ireland at a Forum for a Better Housing Market NI event, held at Parliament Buildings, Stormont, Belfast.



Customers of Registered Developers in Northern Ireland can now enjoy the same level of consumer protection as their counterparts in England, Scotland, and Wales, extending the benefits of our framework uniformly across the nation.

- [Read the full article here](#)

How has the New Homes Quality Board improved customer confidence? Listen to Gleeson Homes's CEO, Graham Prothero, explain...

Our recent visit to Gleeson Homes provided valuable insights into how their organisation is not only fully embracing the Code but also actively using it to build trust with potential customers.

In an exclusive interview with the team at Gleeson Homes, Graham Prothero, CEO, shares first-hand how the New Homes Quality Board has improved customer confidence.





Introducing the NHQB's Scottish Advisory Group in Partnership with Homes for Scotland

In our commitment to understanding and addressing the distinct needs of developers across the UK, the New Homes Quality Board has launched a Scottish Advisory Group. In collaboration with prominent industry leaders from Scotland and Homes For Scotland, this initiative aims to delve into the specific nuances of the Scottish housebuilding sector.

Through the cooperation of the Scottish Advisory Group and Homes for Scotland, we're taking a positive step toward fostering a more inclusive and representative standard, tailored to meet the unique differences of developers.

- [Learn more about Homes for Scotland](#)



Snagging; the NHQB's First Best Practice Learning Report

Spotting the critical role that consumer insights play in helping developers understand customer requirements and set expectations, we were delighted to publish our first Best Practice Learning Report, focusing on the issue of Snagging.

The NHQB engaged with both current and prospective owners of new build homes to gain better insights into customer perspectives on snagging. Our goal was to extract the expectations these homeowners have regarding resolution processes, and what developers could do to improve satisfaction.



[Read the full report here.](#)

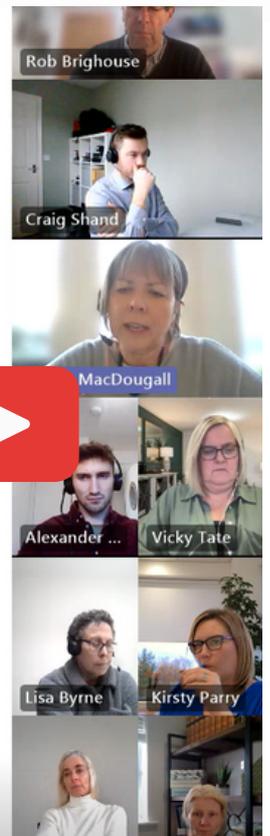
Looking ahead, the NHQB is excited to announce that the next Best Practice Report will focus on Complaints Handling. Scheduled for release in the new year, this report will delve into the most effective strategies for addressing and resolving complaints.

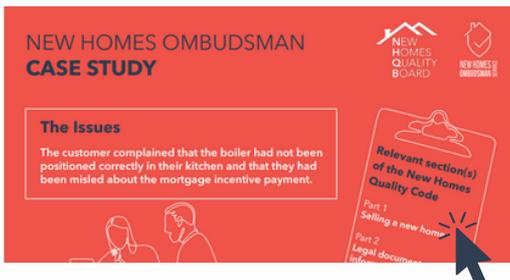
Watch our first Live Developer Forum with the New Homes Ombudsman

We recently hosted the first in a series of online developer forums, aimed at providing support to our developers and learning how we can support them. The event saw nearly all our developers in attendance — underscoring the willingness to engage and learn.

This forum featured a spotlight on the New Homes Ombudsman Service (NHOS) and how the adjudication process works. Developers had the opportunity to engage directly with Alison MacDougall, the New Homes Ombudsman, and discover how their organisations can benefit from NHOS case studies.

We plan more of these online forums in 2024 to support developers, so look out for further information soon.





Turning grievances into opportunities, what can the NHOS Complaint Case Studies tell us?

During this year, the first eligible complaints were ruled on by the New Homes Ombudsman. Not only did this confirm its successful function for customers, but it also gave us an insight into what issues customers are facing with their new homes.

From boilers in unexpected places to confusing incentive payments, each new case study is the real-life story of a homeowner who has had to navigate buying and moving into a new build home. While no complaint has been fully upheld yet, it is important to note that we can still learn from these issues to avoid similar complaints going to the New Homes Ombudsman in the future.

- [Find all of our NHOS Compliant Case Studies on the NHQB LinkedIn page](#)

NHQB introduces new Self-Assessment Audits

At NHQB, we take compliance very seriously. It is key to ensuring that our developers align with the Code and this in turn, plays a crucial role in enhancing the customer's experience when purchasing a home. To uphold this commitment, we have established a developer compliance program, which consists of two essential components: self-assessments and onsite audits.



Whilst on-site audits will launch in the new year, the self-assessment audit launched in June and, has been key for monitoring progress. This is an opportunity to demonstrate full Code compliance and get some support in areas where more help is required. It is not just about ticking boxes; it's a collaborative effort to refine processes to ensure we're creating a community of developers committed to excellence.

- [If you are interested in learning more about our audit processes, reach out to us here](#)

Will there be any immediate fees for NHOS Complaints?

When the NHQC and the New Homes Ombudsman were launched in 2022, the framework included a £500 charge to developers when a complaint against them was upheld.

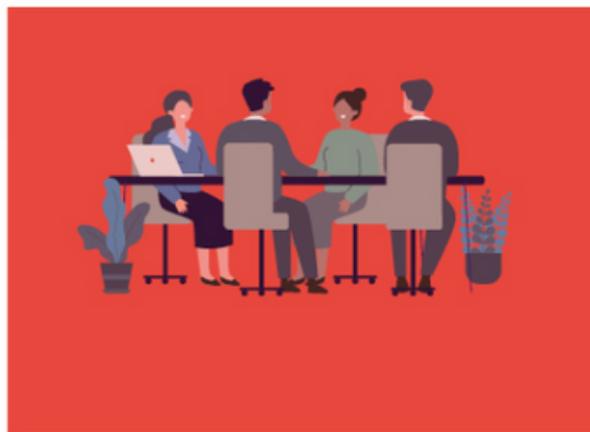
After a review of the challenges facing our sector, we elected to defer the implementation of any complaints charges. This will provide room for the new arrangements to settle in and for the NHOS to gauge the level and complexity of complaints raised. This will be reviewed during 2024 and if there are any changes, developers will receive no less than six months' notice before the introduction of NHOS charges.

CHANGES TO THE TEAM

Welcome!

Lewis Shand Smith, Chair of the Code Council

We are pleased to welcome Lewis Shand-Smith as the independent Chair of the NHQB Code Council. Former Chief Ombudsman and Chief Executive of Ombudsman Services, Lewis brings unparalleled expertise in independent dispute resolution. Currently, he is actively identifying and inviting members to join the NHQB Code Council in preparation for the initial Code review scheduled for the first half of 2024.



Victoria Knowles, Head of Communications

Joining us in January, Victoria Knowles will become our new Head of Communications. A communications expert, Victoria comes to us from the Considerate Constructors Scheme, sharing our commitment to elevating standards and building trust in the construction industry. We look forward to welcoming her valuable insight into enhancing our communication strategy.

Off to pastures new...

Leon Livermore, Chief Executive

Leon joined in April 2022 and has been instrumental in setting up the organisation for success. His experience has helped forge strong relationships with consumer groups, policymakers, and key stakeholders. We wish him well as he leaves to pursue other opportunities.

Andrew Preece, Industry Engagement Manager

Many of you will know Andrew, our Industry Engagement Manager. Andrew has worked closely with developers from Aberdeen to Andover, answering questions and providing support regarding application, transition, activation, and renewal. Andrew leaves us in February and we wish him all the best in his new role.

