



# Winter 2025 Newsletter



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

As we come to the end of another busy year for the New Homes Quality Board, this winter newsletter offers an opportunity to reflect on the progress we have made and to look ahead to 2026 with enthusiasm and a shared commitment to raising standards. Central to our work has been the continued evolution of the New Homes Quality Code. Over the past few months - and continuing into next year - we have been working with registered developers to provide support in preparing for the forthcoming updates to the Code, which come into effect on 2 March 2026. These updates are designed to further strengthen the consumer protections, improve transparency at every stage of the home-buying journey, and ensure the Code continues to set the benchmark for quality, service, and accountability across new-build homes.

Alongside this, we have been deepening our engagement with policymakers, providing evidence, insight, and practical recommendations to support a regulatory environment that prioritises consumer confidence and supports developers to raise standards. Our conversations across government and the wider housing sector remain essential to driving lasting improvement.

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DECEMBER 2025

## CHAIR'S MESSAGE

In October, the NHQB also formally took on the operation of the Shared Ownership Code. This important milestone extends our reach, so that shared owners also can now benefit from greater transparency, fairness, and a more consistent customer experience.

We hope you enjoy this update, and thank you for your continued support. On behalf of the NHQB, we would also like to wish everyone a joyful Christmas and a prosperous New Year as the festive season approaches.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rob Brighouse', with a stylized, cursive script.

**Rob Brighouse, Chair of the New Homes Quality Board**

### Support in preparing for the updated Code

In preparation for the Code v2, which comes into effect on 2 March 2026, we are providing you with support to help transition from the current Code v1 (October 2023) to the updated requirements.

Alongside the Transition Guide, Q&As, and our series of webinars, we have also released the new training course on the updated Code, which all customer-facing teams are required to complete before the Code v2 comes into effect. We also recommend all staff complete the training to have a consistent understanding across your organisation.

This course replaces the current version and is available as a web-based resource [here](#), or through your organisation's learning management system.

Here is a recap of other resources available to support you on your journey. Log in to the developer portal to access these resources.

- Transition Guide
- Supporting resources and templates
- Common questions and answers

Our Code update webinars continue to be extremely popular. You can book a place on the next session using the link below. Please note that these sessions are not training; they are an opportunity to ask our industry engagement team questions about implementing the updates to the Code.

[29 January 2026, 1000-1100 - click here to book](#)

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### Spotlight on SMEs

NHQB continues to strengthen its engagement with smaller developers through industry forums and roundtables.

In July, our Chief Executive Emma Toms joined the All-Party Parliamentary Group for SME Housebuilders to explore how policy can better support smaller developers. These events reinforce NHQB's mission: helping developers of all sizes embed quality and service improvements through the Code and protecting customers through the New Homes Ombudsman Service (NHOS).

NHQB's industry engagement team, Amy Wright and Hannah Reid, are on hand to support developers in implementing the Code. With first-hand

# LATEST DEVELOPMENTS

experience working within developers and implementing the Code, they understand the challenges organisations can face and can guide developers through to full compliance. If your organisation has applied but has not yet completed the process, you can contact the team at [developers@nhqb.org.uk](mailto:developers@nhqb.org.uk).

## Customer complaints – Ombudsman & case studies

From 1 January to 25 November 2025, the New Homes Ombudsman Service received 1,328 customer complaints, with 457 new complaints accepted for investigation. It has issued 129 final decisions. Of those decisions, 20 were upheld, 24 not upheld, and 85 partially upheld.

The latest eight [case studies](#) were published on our website in October, including issues around:

- Delays in snagging repairs, poor communication, and unapproved changes to gardens and parking areas.
- Attempts to discourage customers from proceeding with purchases.
- Lack of transparency around estate agency fees, ongoing issues, and poor complaint handling.
- Flooding and damage caused by a major leak and poor repair work.

Case studies outline key learnings and recommendations to help developers improve processes and deliver better outcomes for customers. All case studies can be viewed [here](#).

New Homes Ombudsman Case Study: **Progression of Purchase**



**Issue**  
The customer complained that they were discouraged from proceeding with the exchange of contracts after they had reserved the property. They claim that they experienced various difficulties in progressing with the purchase. For example, the developer's portal was not fit for purpose, their emails were ignored or not adequately responded to, they were provided with incorrect information, and the developer tried to cancel the transaction.

**Relevant sections of the New Homes Quality Code**  
**Part 3:** After-sales, complaints, and the NHOS

**Circumstances**

- During the purchase process, the customer experienced difficulties using the developer's online portal, poor communication, and no clear point of contact. When they escalated concerns to the CEO, the complaint was assigned to the same staff member involved.
- The customer claimed incorrect information and unexpected costs delayed the exchange of contracts. They also reported inconsistencies in incentives, including a lower deposit contribution, and alleged the developer had twice attempted to cancel the sale. The developer later offered £1,000 as a goodwill gesture.
- The developer provided an affordability schedule outlining tenure and management costs but excluding typical expenses such as utilities, which were the customer's responsibility to investigate.
- The customer paid a £186 legal document fee, and the Reservation Agreement referred them to the affordability schedule for other costs.
- The Reservation Agreement lapsed before contracts were exchanged.

New Homes Ombudsman Case Study: **Delayed Repairs, Leaks, Mould, and Damp**



**Issue**  
The customer reported long delays in completing repairs, poor workmanship, and ongoing issues with damp, mould, and fungal growth, which they believed posed health risks to their children. They also experienced plumbing leaks and other unresolved snagging issues. Despite providing a snagging report, the developer completed only limited work and failed to address all outstanding items. The customer said the developer missed appointments, sent discourteous emails, and failed to deliver promised goodwill gestures.

**Relevant sections of the New Homes Quality Code**  
**Part 3:** After-sales, complaints, and the NHOS

**Circumstances**

- During their seven-day check after moving in, the customer raised several issues with the developer, including mould in the lower ground-floor toilet. Over time, further damp and mould appeared in the hall, bathroom, and living area, which the customer believed posed health risks to their children.
- They said the developer had monitored the problem but failed to take effective remedial action.
- The customer also experienced plumbing failures that led to leaks from the downstairs toilet and a radiator. A professional snagging report identified additional defects, including out-of-plumb walls and a damaged canopy. Although the developer arranged for some work to be completed, several issues remained outstanding.
- The customer reported inconsistent communication from the developer, with contractors missing appointments, and limited updates provided on progress. They felt the developer's attitude changed after they submitted feedback through a customer survey.
- Promised goodwill gestures, including a complimentary garden shed and a contribution towards utility bills, were not delivered, leaving the customer frustrated and disappointed with the overall level of service.

New Homes Ombudsman Case Study: **Snagging Issues and Incorrect Parking Installation**



**Issue**  
The customer complained that the developer failed to resolve snagging issues within 30 days and did not provide updates as per the Code. They also complained that the developer built a public footpath in place of a communal visitor parking bay in front of their property. The developer returned to make repairs by digging up their front garden but did so without obtaining permission or giving prior notice.

**Relevant sections of the New Homes Quality Code**  
**Part 3:** After-sales, complaints, and the NHOS

**Circumstances**

- The customer reported multiple snagging issues to the developer. While some remedial works were completed within 30 days, others exceeded this timeframe.
- They also claim that they did not receive updates in line with the communications timeline stated in the New Homes Quality Code.
- Additionally, due to an error, the developer constructed a public footpath in front of the customer's property instead of a visitor parking space.
- Although the developer verbally informed the customer of the necessary corrective work, they failed to provide a scheduled date or obtain consent before digging the front garden.
- The customer expressed concerns about the developer's lack of communication regarding the parking bay. They also claim they had to point out that the developer was excavating using incorrect dimensions.

### Expanding our reach to more customers

In October, NHQB was appointed to operate the [Shared Ownership Code](#) – marking a significant step toward strengthening consumer protections in the affordable housing sector. Under our new role, we will oversee compliance with the Code, promote greater transparency from providers, and enhance standards for shared ownership customers. Many housing providers and housing-related organisations have welcomed the move, saying it will support fairer, clearer guidance for buyers navigating shared ownership schemes.



The Shared Ownership Code is separate from the New Homes Quality Code. Although NHQC-registered developers offering shared ownership homes are not required to become Shared Ownership Code Adopters, they are welcome to begin the process if they wish by applying via the Shared Ownership Code website: <https://sharedownershipcode.org.uk/adopt-the-code/>.

On 2 December, we announced the Shared Ownership Board members, for more information click [here](#).

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### Engaging with policymakers

We have strengthened our policy engagement, including productive discussions at this year's Labour Party Conference. Our work was highlighted positively in Westminster, with Mark Garnier MP and Kate Dearden Minister for Consumer Protection referencing NHQB during a debate on rogue builders.

We also met with key Labour figures, including Naushabah Khan MP (Housing Committee, PPS to the Cabinet Office) and members of the Labour Growth Group, including Andrew Pakes MP, Jack Abbott MP, James Frith MP and Jon Pearce MP, as well as several policy influencers.

These conversations support our ongoing mission to raise standards and strengthen protections for all customers of new-build homes.

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# RAISING CONSUMER AWARENESS

## NHQB in the media

### Which?

Gifts & deals Tech Appliances Home & garden Money Family Health Cars Travel Consumer rights & campaigns Services

News Money Mortgages & property

By clicking a retailer link you consent to third-party cookies that track your onward journey. This enables WT to receive an affiliate commission if you make a purchase, which supports our mission to be the UK's consumer champion.

### 9 tips for buying a new-build property in 2025

We ask experts for buyer tips, including how to get a sub-1% mortgage

10 Nov 2025



**INSIDE  
HOUSING**

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### CIH and L&Q join new board appointed to lead Shared Ownership Code as applications open for providers

NEWS 03.12.25 4.00 PM BY ELLA JESSEL

The New Homes Quality Board (NHQB) has appointed a board to oversee a new code for housing providers designed to standardise the shared ownership experience and improve common issues.

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NEWS

### New Homes Quality Board selected to operate Shared Ownership Code

By Carl Brown | 7 October 2025

New voluntary code will open for formal applications from next month

The New Homes Quality Board (NHQB) has been selected to operate a voluntary code designed to improve shared ownership customer experience.



**THE  
STANDARD**

NEWS SPORT BUSINESS LIFESTYLE CULTURE GOING OUT HOMES & PROPERTY COMMENT

HOMES & PROPERTY | PROPERTY NEWS



### Buying a new-build home: key things to look for and what to avoid when buying a new home

Are new builds, with their brand new appliances and fixtures, as simple a choice as they seem?



NEW LONDON HOMES TEND TO BE APARTMENTS AND CAN BE A GREAT WAY INTO THE HOUSING MARKET

## Events presented/attended so far

- Homes for Scotland Annual Conference (September)
- HBF Housing Market Intelligence 2025 (October)
- The Access Group, Coins convention (November)

### **New NHQB Board member: Paul Turner, Chief Executive Officer, NHBC**

Paul was appointed as NHBC Chief Executive Officer and became an industry non-executive director of the NHQB Board on 1 September 2025, following Steve Wood's departure. He has significant experience in the insurance and financial services sector. He began his professional career in 1994 as an Underwriter at Mercantile & General before moving to Swiss Re. Over two decades at Swiss Re, Paul held various senior roles in underwriting, marketing, business relations and regional leadership, including Chief Underwriting Officer, Asia Pacific, and Head of Life & Health, South-East Asia.

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### **New NHQB Board member and Chair of Shared Ownership Code Board: Ann Santry CBE**

Ann joined the NHQB Board as an industry non-executive director on 17 September 2025. Ann is also Chair of the Shared Ownership Code Board. Ann has worked in the housing sector for over 35 years. Until June 2018, she was CEO of Sovereign, a top 10 housing association, where she led the growth of the business from 11,000 to 56,000 homes. Until October 2025, she was Chair of the Shared Ownership Council, and she currently holds various NED positions at Simply Affordable Homes and the Hill Group.

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### **New NHQB team member: Ellie Ismail, Senior Communications Executive**

Ellie, who joined the organisation earlier this summer, brings a wealth of experience spanning multiple sectors, including the built environment. With a strong background in PR and media relations, she plays a key role in stakeholder communications.

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## Who to talk to when you need help?



### **Compliance and audits:**

[compliance@nhqb.org.uk](mailto:compliance@nhqb.org.uk)

If you need assistance with compliance and audits.



### **Technical support:**

[developers@nhqb.org.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:communications@nhqb.org.uk)

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



### **General queries:**

[info@nhqb.org.uk](mailto:info@nhqb.org.uk)

For general queries about the NHQB.



### **New Homes Ombudsman Service:**

[customer.services@nhos.org.uk](mailto:customer.services@nhos.org.uk)

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