

Press release: Embargoed until Friday 10th February at 9am

Right to Build Expert Task Force launched

Richard Bacon MP announced as Right to Build Task Force Ambassador

The National Custom and Self Build Association (NaCSBA) has announced the launch of a new Right to Build Expert Task Force.

The Task Force will help Local Authorities, community groups and other organisations across the UK deliver large, affordable custom and self-build housing projects.

The Task Force aims to help at least 80 organisations create significantly more affordable homes over the next three years. To help ensure other projects benefit, the lessons learnt will be shared through regional events and case studies within the Right to Build Portal.

Richard Bacon MP, Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Self Build, Custom and Community Housebuilding and Placemaking, who together with NaCSBA has championed the introduction of the Right to Build, said: “Although we have these important new powers in England, custom and self-build housing will only become mainstream if Local Authorities and other organisations truly harness these powers. This is where the new Right to Build Task Force comes in, with its experts on hand to help. This may be Councils needing help setting up, or better marketing of their demand registers, or advice in creating planning strategies. Alternatively, it could also include affordable housing providers or community groups who are needing help to engage with Councils. I am confident the Task Force will deliver real change and I am delighted to become its Ambassador”.

The Task Force is funded by the Nationwide Foundation which aims to increase the availability of decent affordable homes for people in housing need.

Chair of NaCSBA, Michael Holmes, said: “We are grateful to the Nationwide Foundation for supporting NaCSBA’s goal to ensure that people currently in housing need, who want to build their own decent and affordable home, can exercise their Right to Build. The Task Force will deliver valuable support to Local Authorities, affordable housing providers and community groups delivering effective policies and unlocking real projects. We know that English Local Authorities have a duty to grant planning permissions for 18,000 serviced plots by 31st October 2019. And this is only the tip of the iceberg with people registering on the new English demand registers on a daily basis. There is also huge untapped potential in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.”

The Task Force was recognised by Government in its recently published White Paper *Fixing our broken housing market* and is being supported by a number of partners including the Building and Social Housing Foundation, National Housing Federation, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors and Royal Town Planning Institute.

ENDS

Notes to Editors:

- NaCSBA was formed in 2008 as a network of companies and individuals with the common aim of proving that custom and self-build housing can make a significant contribution to home building in the UK. NaCSBA's objective is to make affordable, high quality, individually designed, sustainable homes an option for the many, not just the few.
- The Nationwide Foundation is a registered charity (number 1065552) and an independent funder of charitable causes. Its vision is for everyone in the UK to have access to a decent home which they can afford.
- The Right to Build was established in England in 2016 through two legal obligations on Local Authorities. Under the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 all local authorities in England must keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who are seeking to acquire serviced plots of land in the authority's area and to have regard to that register when carrying out their functions. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 requires all local authorities in England to grant sufficient 'development permissions' to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area, as established by their register, on a rolling basis.
- NaCSBA announced at its Right to Build Expo event in December 2016 that 18,000 people had registered on Local Authority registers across England by 31st October 2016. As a result at least 18,000 serviced plots will need to be consented by 31st October 2019. Further details of the English Local Authorities with demand registers can be found at www.righttobuildportal.org.
- NaCSBA will work with the Scottish, Welsh and Northern Ireland devolved administrations to explore the scope for people in their areas to benefit from a Right to Build.
- Organisations wishing to receive assistance from the Task Force and prospective experts can initially register their interest by emailing info@nacsba.org.uk. Further details on what information should be submitted, selection criteria and conditions for receiving support will be added shortly at www.righttobuildportal.org.
- Further details on the work of the Task Force and its membership will be announced shortly.
- For further press information on the Task Force contact anna-marie@stellarpublishations.com.