

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Construction industry urged to back new planning reform

Graham Watts, Chief Executive of the Construction Industry Council, has called for sector-wide support of the Policy Framework for Planning during a speech at the annual NHBC Council dinner in London this week.

Speaking at the event he described the current planning system as “complex, often impenetrable and littered with delay and cost” and urged the construction industry to back the proposal in a bid to help meet Britain’s housing shortage.

He said: “There is no doubt that we need a new Policy Framework for Planning and all three political parties agree on the need for planning reform; but we are in danger at one extreme of creating a vacuum that would be the worst of all possible worlds; and at the other of sacrificing clarity for brevity.

“What is so wrong with a requirement that if development is sustainable and in line with local priorities then it should go ahead; or requiring that when a Council says no to development that it must have a good reason for doing so. If the Government meets its stated intentions of simplifying the system, strengthening local participation and securing sustainable development then it will be a major policy success. Working together, the industry can help to achieve this.”

Echoing these comments on the need to meet the current and predicted demand for social housing, Imtiaz Farookhi, chief executive of NHBC, added: “Recently we have seen growth in our housing registration numbers; however, given the reduction in central Government funding for social housing, we will need to see an upturn in private demand if the increase in volumes is to continue over the next few years.

“In order for the UK to build the higher volumes identified by consecutive governments as required to meet population and household formation, difficult issues such as greater

mortgage availability and consumer confidence during current economic volatility will need to be addressed.”

The latest NHBC statistics for July saw a dip in registrations (from 14,565 in June to 11,310 in July); however nearly 6,000 more new homes were registered with NHBC in May – July 2011, compared with the same period last year (from 30,771 to 36,716).

**Ends**

**Notes to editors:**

**About the Construction Industry Council:**

1. The Construction Industry Council (CIC) is the representative forum for the professional bodies, research organisations and specialist business associations in the construction industry. It provides a single voice for professionals in all sectors of the built environment through its collective membership of 500,000 individual professionals and 25,000 firms of construction consultants.

Contact the CIC Press Office on 020 7399 7407 or email [press@cic.org.uk](mailto:press@cic.org.uk)

**About NHBC:**

1. NHBC's primary purpose is to help raise standards to protect homeowners. NHBC is an independent non-profit distributing company, reinvesting all resources in further research and work to improve the construction standard of new UK houses for the benefit of homeowners.
2. NHBC is the leading warranty and insurance provider for new homes in the UK. NHBC's ten-year Buildmark warranty covers over 80 percent of new homes built in the UK, having covered nearly eight million homes since it began and currently protecting around 1.6 million homes. Buildmark has evolved over the years, expanding to cover more areas, offering a greater scope of protection for homeowners.

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