

CLOSED: Research and Innovation: call in Coventry and Warwickshire (OC06R19P1025)

Call to run a project providing research and innovation support in Coventry and Warwickshire

Press release: Expert animal welfare body expanded to advise Government on future reforms

The remit of an expert animal welfare body which advises Government has been expanded to provide research and advice on pets, wild animals kept by people as well as farmed animals.

Housing Secretary unveils green housing revolution

- New green standard for all new build homes – cutting carbon emissions for generations to come
- Ambitious revamp of planning rules to create a simpler system that works for all
- First-ever government design manual to promote the building of beautiful new homes

A new green standard for new build homes will bring an environmental revolution to home building – tackling climate change while keeping household bills low.

Unveiled by the Housing Secretary, Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP, the Future Homes Standard will see polluting fossil fuel heating systems such as gas boilers banned from new homes by 2025 and replaced with the latest generation of clean technology – such as air source heat pumps and cutting-edge solar panels.

Ministers will also consult on a new blueprint to overhaul the planning system in order to create a simpler, fairer system that works for everyone – from home owners to small and medium businesses, local communities to housing developers.

The government has also announced plans for a new national design code that will ensure developers build beautiful, well designed homes that people are proud to live in.

In the coming months, every single local authority across the country will be expected to produce their own design guide which reflects their unique setting, character and history, while meeting the expected national standard.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said:

Building new homes isn't just about bricks and mortar, I want to ensure everyone – including developers – do their bit to protect the environment and give the next generation beautiful, environmentally friendly homes that local communities can support.

That's why I am requiring carbon emissions are cut by up to 80% from 2025 for all new homes and have published a National Design Guide, setting out simply what we expect from new development.

We are also reforming the planning system making it faster and more efficient for everyone, from households to large developers, alongside giving families greater freedom to extend their homes to meet their changing needs.

Future Homes Standard

The government has launched a [consultation](#) on stronger building regulations that will pave the way for the Future Homes Standard.

The 2020 changes aim to improve the environment by cutting carbon emissions in new homes by almost a third, while keeping bills low.

Using new technologies such as air source heat pumps and the latest generation of solar panels, developers will need to ensure they are doing their bit to tackle the threat of climate change.

Views are being sought on how changes to building regulations can drive down the carbon footprint of homes built after 2025 – including changes to the ventilation and efficiency requirements as well as the role of councils in getting the best energy standards from developers. The consultation will run until January 2020.

Homeowners could potentially save on their energy bills as developments in the fabric of buildings, such as wall insulation and heating, help drive down the cost of keeping homes warm.

Accelerated planning green paper

The government has also confirmed proposals to speed up the planning system, including the potential for more fees to be refunded if councils take too long to decide on specific planning applications.

The move will benefit all planning applicants, from housing developers to individual householders seeking to extend or modify their own home, as it ensures councils work at pace to decide proposals.

Local residents will no longer have to contend with a complicated and outdated planning system, but a more user-friendly approach designed to simplify the process. Small developers will similarly benefit from the simplification of guidance, with the introduction of a new tiered planning system.

Application fees will also be reviewed to ensure council planning departments are properly resourced, providing more qualified planners to process applications for new homes and other proposals.

The accelerated planning green paper will be published in November 2019. Government has also set out its ambition to reduce planning conditions by a third, and will take forward proposals to allow homes to be built above existing properties as well as seeking views on demolishing old commercial buildings for new housing, revitalising high streets in the process.

Design quality

The first-ever government-backed National Model Design Code will be published in the New Year, and will set out a clear model for promoting a better design and style of homes across the country, shaped by what local people want.

The government has been clear that new builds must fit into existing communities, which means they are more likely to be welcomed by residents and provide places people will love to call home.

A new [National Design Guide](#) has also been published today, setting out a blueprint for how local authorities can achieve quality and great design, and recommends what developers need to deliver to help win the support of communities – ensuring new homes are built quicker and better.

The document also asks councils to prepare and implement their own design codes, in line with the national standard, which can reflect their unique setting and character.

Pocket parks

Reflecting on the benefits that parks and green spaces bring to local life, the government has confirmed further new funding for another round of the pocket parks programme, helping communities transform unloved, neglected or derelict urban areas into new green spaces.

Reimagined spaces will be used for everything from children's play areas, to vegetable patches and community events, benefiting the mental and physical health of people who use them.

Funded projects will be led by community groups, in partnership with local authorities, to refurbish parks and encourage community activities.

This is part of the government's ambition to ensure that communities have a real sense of identity and place, and that everyone has the opportunity to enjoy green spaces nearby.

Further information

Future Homes Standard

The Future Homes Standard will set minimum environmental standards for all new housing, including a commitment to removing traditional fossil fuel heating systems from 2025.

A further consultation on the Future Homes Standard will follow in the coming months, proposing changes to the energy efficiency standards for non-domestic buildings and for building work to existing homes and non-domestic buildings; and on preventing overheating in buildings.

Pocket parks

An additional £1.35 million has been made available for local communities.

It follows an initial £3.7 million fund was created for new pocket parks and to allow the refurbishment of existing parks. Winners were announced in March 2019 with over 150 communities right across the country receiving funding.

[Detailed guide: The Seed Potato Classification Scheme](#)

How to apply for certification, the register of growers and fees for crop and tuber inspections under the SPCS.

HMRC Interim Chief Executive appointment confirmed

We are pleased to confirm today, 1 October, that current Deputy Chief Executive [Jim Harra](#) has been confirmed as HMRC's Interim Chief Executive with immediate effect.

Jim will remain as Interim Chief Executive until a permanent appointment is made, and has also been appointed Interim Accounting Officer.

Having [announced his departure in July 2019](#), Sir Jonathan Thompson officially left HMRC on Monday 30 September to take up a new role as Chief Executive of the Financial Reporting Council.