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Collective Custom Build is a web-based advocacy tool that makes the case for developing Collective Custom Build as part of a more diverse housing market in the UK. It uses an animated narrative to curate key research findings, revealing them as peelbacks at key points in its argument.

Collective Custom Build is part of the *Motivating Collective Custom Build* practice-based research project within the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded *Home Improvements Knowledge Exchange* based at the University of Sheffield. *Motivating Collective Custom build* is led jointly by the University of Sheffield School of Architecture, Ash Sakula Architects and Design for Homes.

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NEXT STEPS: PRIVATE SECTOR

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO ENABLE COLLECTIVE CUSTOM BUILD

Summary

A number of key publications have recommended actions that could be taken by Private Sector organisations such as developers, house-builders and small-builders to enable the greater fulfilment of Collective Custom Build (Homebuilding & Renovating, 2013; NaSBA, 2013, 2012a, 2012b, 2011; Parvin et al., 2011; Self Build Portal, 2013; Wallace et al., 2013) .

This study has also found that the most effective strategy in successful examples has been the identification and establishment of partnerships between organisations from different sectors, in order to work mutually and overcome significant barriers, such as identification and access to suitable land, access to finance - particularly short-term development finance - forming and maintaining a successful Collective Custom Build group, and negotiating planning and other statutory obligations.

Whilst the Self Build Portal¹ web-platform is designed to inform the general public about how they can access self-provided housing, the National Self Build Association (NaSBA) publish specific guidance for Planners (NaSBA, 2012b)² and the Public Sector (NaSBA, 2013) on the next steps they can take and plan further guidance for Lenders and the Private Sector.

Although aimed primarily at the Public Sector, 'How The Public Sector Can Help People Build Their Own Homes - A Practice Guide' (NaSBA, 2013) outlines sixteen distinct conditions likely to be encountered in relation to 'self-build' - such as forms of constitution, and terms that describe the level of direct involvement by self-providers in building their own homes - and makes recommendations that could also be applied by private sector organisations

A number of private companies are diversifying as Custom Build Developers and Development Managers in order to respond to the opportunities presented by Collective Custom Build, and are actively seeking development partners to explore how self-provision could mix with traditional house-

¹ Please visit www.selfbuildportal.org.uk

² NaSBA also intends to publish guides for Developers and Lenders and to update these guides periodically in line with developments in the self-provided housing sector.

building development (Fairgrove Homes Ltd, 2013; HAB, 2013; Igloo, 2013; Solidspace, 2013; Urban Self Build, 2013 and others).

A number of key sources make specific recommendations for the private sector, which are discussed below.

Build-It-Yourself?

Wallace et al. have undertaken a thorough examination of the lending market for self-build and make specific recommendations for developers and private sector lenders³, highlighting the significant opportunities that exist in the sector (2013, pp. 7–9) as well as the need for specific support for 'group self-build housing' if it is to gain wider market traction:

- Developers and registered providers should recognise the social and economic benefits of working with prospective residents/purchasers to enable them to procure and/or customise their homes. There are also opportunities to work collaboratively as enablers to provide packaged solutions of professional services to help self-builders overcome the 'silo' approach that currently characterises and slows the self-build process.
- Lenders should provide additional guidance to potential self-builders about the criteria for funding. They should appraise the risks that pertain to the different procurement models and consider whether products can be tailored to reflect the different risk profiles. They should work across the industry to smooth lending processes to the sector and consider working in consort with other lenders, developers, housing associations or local authorities to effect the delivery of large-scale self-build sites. They should also consider the development of more accessible products for individual customers.

(Wallace et al., 2013, pp. 8–9)

A Right To Build

Parvin et al. (2011) suggest and illustrate a number of 'near-future scenarios' in which self-provided housing could be 'scaled up' as a mainstream option, including details of the roles required of key stakeholders, such as Local Authorities, other public and third sector organisations, developers and self-providing groups (Ibid. 2011, pp. 125–143)⁴. The study also includes an 'index of key actions' required to create the conditions for each scenario (Ibid. 2011, p. 152).

Parvin et al. also recommend a series of key actions that could be taken by private sector developers, land-owners, contractors, consultants and manufacturers:

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- *Self-provided plots as 'seed' development* - Develop business models which use plot-promotion on part or all of sites as a means to catalyse placemaking and de-risk the initial phases of development, or to shift from short to long-term revenues
- *Take out market risk* - Seek to partner with local authorities and self-providing groups to deliver houses, effectively as a form of pre-sales. This will require new ways of working for users who are leading projects, and new ways of eliminating risk.

³ Wallace et al. also make specific recommendations for central Government and Local Authorities (see Wallace et al., 2013, pp. 7–9).

⁴ The scenarios explored by Parvin et al. include Suburban Co-housing, Urban Community Land Trusts and Self-Build Zones (Ibid. 2011, pp. 125–143).

- *Innovation* - Innovate to capitalise on the latent-desire to self-provide by designing processes and products which makes self-provision easier, less risky and more sustainable. Design-in capacity for the investment of user 'sweat equity' where appropriate. This may include sharing risk for fees at the initial stages of a project.
- *Communication* - The shift towards a mass-micro operating model means communicating with non-professionals as much as professionals, without 'dumbing down' the full complexity of options or reverting to a 'consultation' mindset. Clear user-facing interfaces of all kinds, throughout the process are required to allow self-providers to make informed decisions.

(Parvin et al., 2011, p. 153)

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This excerpt is taken from www.collectivecustombuild.org and forms a single element of a wider research study. Please visit the website or contact us at collectivecustombuild@sheffield.ac.uk for more information.



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homeimprovements