

Code for Sustainable Homes

The code sets the standard for energy efficiency and sustainability for all future housing in England. The aim being to reduce the environmental impact of housing, beyond that under current building regulations. All new builds from 2016 will be carbon neutral.

New homes are awarded a star rating from 1-6 based on their performance against 9 criteria that evaluate the overall environmental impact. A development with six stars will be carbon neutral, return energy to the national grid and be as sustainable as is possible.

The 9 criteria for evaluating sustainability

- 1. Energy /CO2** – The amount of energy used and emission produced each day as determined by the 2006 Building Regulation Document L
- 2. Water**- amount of water used per person per day in litres internally and methods to reduce external potable water consumption
- 3. Materials**- impact of construction materials
- 4. Surface water run-off**- change in existing patterns, the avoidance of run off and the influence of flood risk
- 5. Waste**- site waste management and the targets set to promote efficiency and household waste storage that encourages recycling
- 6. Pollution**- that results from the operating of the building, be it global warming potential or Nitrous Oxide (Nox) emissions
- 7. Health and well-being** – the effect the dwelling has on its inhabitants
- 8. Management** – steps taken to ensure the reduction of environmental impacts from construction and living in the building
- 9. Ecology** – impact on the local ecosystem, biodiversity and steps taken to enhance or protect the local ecology

From May 2008 it is mandatory for all new homes to be rated against the code, with technical guidance being amended every six months resulting in changes in building methods and materials.

Landowners and agents are selling plots with stipulations for the developer to build to a certain Code level.

For further information about the code and the consultant document "*Building a Greener Future: Towards Zero Carbon Development*" go to:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/codesustainabilitystandards>

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/archived/publications/planningandbuilding/buildinggreener>