

Thursday September 23, 2020.

GREEN HOUSING REVOLUTION Delivery Hub to be set up to supercharge plans for net zero, environmentally positive new homes

A new cross sector Future Homes Task Force has announced that a multi-million pound Delivery Hub will be set up to manage the home building industry's drive to meet the environmental targets set out by Government.

The Task Force, comprising of representatives from across all the sectors that shape new homes including government, house building, utility provision, material suppliers and environmental groups met yesterday with wider industry leaders at the second Housing and Environment Summit.

The challenge includes the construction and fabric efficiency of tomorrow's new homes, how they are powered and how they take account of and impact on the environment within which they sit. Meeting these high-level ambitions, in a realistic and deliverable way will require the coordination of numerous issues and regulatory requirements into an overarching Masterplan. The Task force will lead this work and develop the Masterplan to sequence and prioritise workstreams across the sector, including with its supply chains. It will be founded on the main environmental targets articulated by the government – on Net Zero, the natural environment, resources, water and air quality.

One of the first objectives of the Task Force will be to establish a fully funded Delivery Hub to implement the Masterplan and drive forward work on a day to day basis. Its full-time team will coordinate and facilitate activity. The Hub will develop planning for the broad range of interlinked climate, natural environment and resource targets that will need to be met to meet the ultimate objective of net zero.

Housing Secretary Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP said: "This Government is improving building standards and overhauling our outdated planning system as a priority. By putting communities in control of what is built locally we will deliver better designed, more sustainable buildings and the homes that are needed for the next generation.

"I look forward to seeing the recommendations and plans of the Future Homes Task Force later this year to support this exciting agenda as we work towards a cleaner, greener and more beautiful built environment."

Speaking today, Stewart Baseley, executive chairman at HBF said; "The environmental agenda is an absolute priority for the UK's house building industry and one on which we are committed to leading the way. We have been set a huge challenge by Government,



but it is one we are determined to deliver. We will work with government and stakeholders to set ambitious but deliverable goals that will ensure we make our contribution to environmental targets and achieve our ambition of net zero homes and a net zero industry. The work of the Task Force will help deliver homes that we can all be proud of as a nation and future generations will thank us for.”

The summit demonstrated that there is strong support for agreeing a Masterplan that will provide clear outcome based objectives for the longer term, with milestones and enabling actions to be taken in the interim period to ensure delivery. Delegates emphasised the need for long term certainty and cross-party support to provide confidence for investment in innovation and solutions. It was agreed further work needed to be inclusive; include consumers; factor in existing steps by the supply chain to innovate; work with the finance sector on enabling measures; and consider ways to assist the many SMEs in home building in managing change.

The route to net zero and environmentally positive house building is a complex one containing numerous considerations that need to be factored in including; achieving net zero greenhouse gases; water issues; the impact of new homes on bio-diversity and nature; what resources are used and waste is produced; air quality; flood and climate resistance; the wider effect housing has on its social and built environment.

All of these, and the myriad of detail under each of them, will be aligned into three main areas of focus:

1. Place making and the impact new homes have on the wider environment – new developments will need to be planned for a net zero world and complement, not detract from their natural environments; whilst the changing climate needs to be factored into design of housing.
2. Working with utility companies on connection and infrastructure issues – the shift to electric only heating and car charging points for example will hugely increase demand and pressure on local networks.
3. The ‘fabric of the house’ - to achieve world leading energy efficient new homes;
 - Low carbon heating, with no new homes using gas by 2025
 - More ambitious water efficiency standards, green roofs, reflective walls
 - Improved flood resilience
 - Triple glazed windows and more fresh air, mechanical ventilation and passive cooling
 - Electric car charging points

To deliver these objectives will require input and collaboration from a broad range of stakeholders. Technologies will need to be developed and proved and then mainstreamed – not least with regards to post gas heating solutions; whilst consumers will need to be consulted with and educated as new technologies emerge. Supply chains will need to be created; new skills and training developed for production and

maintenance of new technologies, and person capacity built.

The Taskforce's Masterplan will allow for the Delivery Hub to plot a route through that meets the requirements of Government and the needs of consumers.

Emma Howard Boyd, Environment Agency chair said;

“Meeting the ambition that all new homes are net zero, climate resilient and make a positive contribution to the environment is an essential contribution to tackling the climate and nature emergencies. Government and regulators, including the Environment Agency, will need to play their full part, working collaboratively with industry, designers and environmentalists.”

David Thomas, CEO for Barratt Developments PLC, one of the Task Force members, said: “We believe that every business needs to take responsibility for tackling climate change and are proud to be working alongside other industry leaders to build for a greener future. Having recently become the first major national housebuilder to have our science based carbon reduction targets approved by the SBTi, we are committed to playing our part in safeguarding the environment and supporting the UK's green recovery.”

Becky Speight, chief executive of The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) “The next decade is absolutely critical in tackling both the nature and climate crises – we have lost so much of our wildlife already, and we cannot afford any more lost time. Where we place new homes, and how we build nature and green space into new developments, will have a significant impact on nature's recovery. We are looking forward to working with partners through the Future Homes Task Force to make this a practical reality.”

Ed Lockhart, convenor of the Broadway Initiative said: 'the new homes sector is taking a real lead here in developing the first sector-wide plan for net zero and wider environmental targets, to help everyone involved to plan, invest and collaborate to build the houses the country needs while being fit for the future challenges we face as a society.'

- ENDS -

For media enquiries, or to arrange an interview, please contact Steve Turner on 020 7960 1606 or 07919 307760. Steve.turner@hbf.co.uk

Notes to editors

1. The Home Builders Federation (HBF) is the representative body of the home building industry in England and Wales. The HBF's member firms account for some 80% of all new homes built in England and Wales in any one year, and include companies of all sizes, ranging from multi-national, household names through regionally based businesses to small local companies: www.hbf.co.uk
2. The Broadway Initiative is a platform for all sectors of the economy and society to work together on

the frameworks, plans and partnerships needed to meet net-zero emissions and wider environmental goals. www.iema.net/broadway

3. The Task Force comprises the following people/organisations;
David Thomas, Barratt Developments ;Rob Boughton, Thakeham Group; Rachel Whelan, Archway Homes; Steve Wood, NHBC; Neil Jefferson, HBF; MHCLG; DBEIS; Defra; HMT (to be confirmed); Emma Howard-Boyd, Environment Agency; Rachel Fletcher, OFWAT; OFGEM; Nick Walkley, Homes England; LGA (to be confirmed); Victoria Hills, RTPI; Lord Kerslake; Shaun McCarthy, Supply Chain Sustainability School; Julie Hirogoyen, UKGBC; Rebecca Speight, RSPB; Rhian-Mari Thomas, Green Finance Institute; Emma Pinchbeck, Energy UK; Christine McGourty, Water UK; Mike Chaldecott, St Gobain; Alyssa Gilbert, Imperial College; Ed Lockhart, Broadway Initiative.