

LCH 06

Ymateb gan : Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Caerffili
Evidence from : Caerphilly County Borough Council

- **The Welsh Government must urgently revise Building Regulations to ensure that all new houses are built to ‘near zero’ energy standards.**

We need to be building sufficient homes in Wales to meet all housing needs. Failure to do so will mean that people live in sub-standard housing conditions or may become homeless. It is essential that Welsh Government works with the building industry to ensure that the total number of new homes delivered by the industry is not affected by the revision of Building Regulations, either through cost, skills shortage or quality.

Unless the building industry can reduce the costs of the revision required to Building Regulations by achieving economies of scale, it is likely that the additional costs of building a home will be passed onto the prospective homeowner, thereby increasing people’s housing costs, or that the quality of homes will be compromised to meet any additional cost.

Any increase in build costs is likely to affect the financial viability of new housing schemes. If so, the number of ‘affordable homes’ delivered through the planning system is likely to reduce. If Welsh Government wants to maintain current levels of affordable housing it may need to increase the level of grant given to local authorities and housing associations.

There are numerous examples of near zero energy/carbon neutral small-scale developments built throughout the UK. If we are going to meet deadlines and targets we need to ensure that the building industry has the skills and resources to rapidly up-scale the development of near zero energy homes.

- **Wales must, on completion of a successful trial of SOLCER type (low carbon and energy positive) homes at scale, move to extending its energy efficiency requirements for new homes beyond ‘near zero’ carbon to a level of efficiency where surplus energy is produced.**

Comments would be the same as for the previous recommendation. However, moving towards energy efficiency requirements for all new homes beyond ‘near zero’ needs to be achieved in a balanced way, in partnership with the building industry, to ensure that the total number of new homes required to be built to satisfy identified housing needs is not affected.