



## » Code for Sustainable Homes and Home Quality Mark

Elvet Construction Consultants are licensed BREEAM Code for Sustainable Homes Assessors. Our key services to clients include pre-assessment guidance, design review, design stage and post construction assessment.

The Code for Sustainable Homes is the current environmental assessment rating method for new homes. It enables housing developers from the public and private sector to measure the environmental performance in a two-stage process (design stage and post construction stage) using objective criteria and verification. In March 2015, the Government announced plans to simplify regulations and standards, driven by Building Regulations.

As a result of a review, Local Authorities in England no longer require the Code as a planning condition for new approvals, however, where there are existing contractual arrangements, for example with Registered Social Landlords under the Affordable Funding Programme 2015-2018, it will be possible to continue to register and certify against the Code.

Here at Elvet Construction Consultants, we are working with our clients to deliver the Code for Sustainable Homes but as licensed code assessors, we are also focusing on how we can deliver against the new standard, the Home Quality Mark.

The government introduced the Code for Sustainable Homes (CfSH) as a formal environmental assessment

## Sustainability

tool to measure the overall performance of new homes built by the public and private sector. The intention of the CfSH was to continually improve the overall efficiency of the dwelling, which exceeded the requirements of Building Regulations, while at the same time ensuring the long term sustainability of the dwelling. The Homes and Community Agency insisted that social housing providers achieved at least a CfSH level 3 rating to obtain grant funding to offset the cost of providing new build affordable housing. In addition, Local Authorities could insist that private developers met certain CfSH levels as part of the planning requirements, which could be applied at their discretion i.e. no national minimum requirement. This led to different parties within the housing development sector raising concerns that the current system was too complicated and increased the build cost, which was contributing to the failure of delivering new homes to meet the current demand. The government announced in March 2015, after a review of the current planning system, that the CfSH would be withdrawn as part of the Deregulation Bill 2015.

In response to the announcement, the BRE has introduced a new assessment tool the Home Quality Mark to replace the Code for Sustainable Homes.

## » Home Quality Mark (HQM)

The Home Quality Mark (HQM) is the new national standard for homes using a simple 5-star rating to provide information on a new home's design, construction quality and running costs. The 5-star rating will make it easier for customers to quickly compare different homes in terms of their overall performance.

Developed by BRE, the new HQM aims to transform the way consumers choose the homes they buy and rent and allows house builders to differentiate themselves in the marketplace.

The HQM provides developers with the tools they need to convince customers of the quality and added benefits of their new home – such as being cheaper to run, less maintenance, better located and being able to cope with the demands of climate change.

Our Surveyors are qualified HQM assessors and can provide consultation on how to achieve this accreditation at any stage of the pre-development stage.



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## » Conclusion

Although the government has decided to withdraw the CfSH for new development they are still committed to improving the overall energy efficiency of new houses. They intend to achieve this by increasing the requirements under Building Regulations to set a minimum requirement that would have achieved a Level 4 rating under the defunct CfSH. Elvet have invested in extensive training to ensure that our surveyors can advise our clients on all aspects of their sustainability requirements for new build properties and are not only qualified CfSH and HQM assessors, but can provide SAP calculations, u-value calculations, BREEAM assessments, commercial energy assessments and Energy Performance Certificates.

For more information regarding our sustainability services please do not hesitate to contact us at [info@elvetconsultants.co.uk](mailto:info@elvetconsultants.co.uk)



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