

Homes England's MMC research study takes shape

Homes England, the government's housing agency, has finalised its research themes for its six-year, 1,800 home Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) Research Commission and has today published a [report outlining the study](#).

One year in, research and development partners Atkins and Faithful+Gould have completed a large body of work to shape the data and collection methodology and start data collection, as well as engagement with industry.

As part of the government's objective to improve construction productivity and encourage the uptake of MMC in housing delivery, the next phase of this research project will see data collected across eight of Homes England's sites using MMC.

Monitoring the construction of around 1,800 homes across the country over several years, the study will test the performance of different types of MMC to provide long-term, in-depth and verifiable data so that informed decisions about emerging construction technologies can be made.

Covering a range of offsite and modular building techniques, modern methods of construction have the potential to be significantly more productive than traditional building methods; allowing homes to be built more quickly, addressing labour and skills shortages and improving the quality, consistency and energy efficiency of newly built homes.

The research will explore a range of themes, including cost and pace of build, safety performance, snagging and defect issues, construction wastage and logistics and energy efficiency performance. It will also seek to learn lessons about how these technologies will be deployed and give confidence to the industry to drive a greater uptake of MMC technologies.

Working with the Building Research Establishment and University College London, Atkins and Faithful+Gould will collect and monitor data from the developers during the six-year programme and produce annual updates on the research findings, before a final report is published at the end of the build programme.

Housing Minister Rt Hon Christopher Pincher MP said: "Building green, well-designed homes is at the heart of this Government's mission to support people in every part of the country. Our support for Modern Methods of Construction will play a vital role in this and this research will help us further understand these new construction technologies which could be revolutionary for the industry in terms of improved productivity, build speed, and economies of scale."

Robert Stone, Technical Director at Homes England, said: "We are committed to providing the industry with the body of evidence it is asking for in order to

drive a greater understanding of modern house building technologies and increase the uptake of modern methods of construction (MMC). “Now more than ever, we recognise that more needs to be done to share learning and build confidence in MMC. This large-scale, long-term and in-depth project will provide the sector with the valuable evidence it needs to make informed decisions about MMC and deliver better homes faster.”

Terrence Stocks, UK Head of Public Sector at Faithful+Gould, said: “With the impacts of Covid-19 and the realisation of our exit from the EU, the need to protect and improve productivity and grow UK revenue is great. Coupled with the release of the UK Government’s Construction Playbook, the importance of this research project has grown. “The work of the combined Faithful+Gould, Atkins, BRE and UCL teams over the past year has been great, and despite remote working a fully collaborative multi-organisational approach has been maintained, with the final metrics and collection methods of the report being tested with industry. The team and the developer organisations, along with their contractors, are now ready to move forward with increased pace, and the next year will see us gathering and analysing data to support a study that will hopefully drive an accelerated uptake of MMC in the residential sector.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

MMC Research Commission Site Details

The below table outlines the sites and the proposed technologies currently involved in the study, though this is subject to change.

Site Name	Location	Size	Primary MMC Technology
Northstowe Phase 2	Cambridge	406 homes	Modular
East Quayside	Newcastle	292 homes	Light Gauge Steel Frame
Swindon Gateway	Swindon	159 homes	Modular
Spencers Park	Hemel Hempstead	600 homes	Panellised
Grappenhall Heys Phase 2	Warrington	220 homes	Modular & Panellised
York Road	Birmingham	80 homes	Panellised
Tattenhoe Phase 4	Milton Keynes	100 homes	Panellised
Park Prewett – Hollies Phase	Basingstoke	30 homes	Modular

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