

Press release: Homes England supports local authority deliver pilot MMC scheme

Homes England is encouraging partners to develop and use MMC through a range of initiatives and the provision of development finance.

One local authority is exploring the use of MMC to deliver homes for affordable rent through an innovative pilot scheme. Nuneaton and Bedworth Council (NBBC) has just completed its first modular build having securing £120,000 worth of funding from Homes England.

The pilot development consists of four modular semi-detached two bedroom properties, built on former garage sites on Ashington Road, Bedworth and has been used to test the feasibility of using modular housing to increase the pace of housing delivery.

Mat Byrne, Head of Development for NBBC said “We identified modular development as an efficient and cost effective solution to respond to the growing demand for housing. We started from scratch and worked with a local firm to develop a working model for our homes. It’s been a long process and we’ve learnt a lot along the way but as a result of the pilot, we’ve found that we are able to reduce the build time by approximately 10 – 12 weeks when compared with traditional build.”

“This model has enabled us to deliver homes in a reduced timeframe, without compromising on quality with the added benefit of minimising disruption to residents living nearby as the time onsite is significantly reduced.”

The team at NBBC has already identified a further seven sites for potential development over the next year and are working with other local authorities with a view to sharing the knowledge and expertise developed as a result of the pilot. They are also in the process of establishing a procurement framework through which they provide suppliers with more assurances and greater volumes and can achieve economies of scale.

Head of Home Ownership & Supply in the Midlands for Homes England, Caroline Cormack comments: “At Homes England we are committed to promoting modern methods of construction across the industry, so it’s great to see organisations such as Nuneaton & Bedworth Council who are willing to not only conduct their own pilot but also to work with partners to secure a supply chain.”

The newly created framework will enable NBBC to share their knowledge of the modular house process from design and planning through to construction with other local authorities. They are already in discussion with Warwick District Council, Stratford-On-Avon District Council, Rugby Borough Council and North Warwickshire Borough Council for information on their pilot scheme.

Dawn Dawson, Director for Housing, Communities and Economic Development at NBBC said: "I'm really proud of what we've been able to achieve through this pilot scheme and it's opened up conversations in the wider region about how we can diversify the delivery of housing to suit the needs of our communities.

There is still some work to be done around modular construction to dispel myth that it is comparable to the 1960 prefab homes, this couldn't be further from the truth. Modular construction has provided us with high quality, energy efficient, well designed housing that will provide much needed homes for families in Nuneaton and Bedworth."

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