



## Code for Sustainable Homes

### Definition

The Code for Sustainable Homes (the Code) provides a comprehensive picture of the sustainability of a new home. It can be used by progressive home builders to differentiate the performance of their homes from the performance of others and gives consumers the information they need to be able to make sustainable choices.

The Code for Sustainable Homes was launched in December 2006 with the publication of ‘Code for Sustainable Homes: A step change in sustainable home building practice’ (Department of Communities and Local Government 2006).

This introduced a single national standard to be used in design and construction of new homes in England, based on the BRE’s EcoHomes scheme. Adoption of the Code is intended to encourage continuous improvements in sustainable home building.

The Code for Sustainable Homes is a set of sustainable design principles covering performance in nine key areas: Energy, Water, Materials, Surface water run-off, Waste, Pollution, Health and Wellbeing, Management, and Ecology.

In each of these categories, performance targets are proposed which are in excess of the minimum needed to satisfy Building Regulations, but are considered to be best practice, technically feasible, and within the capability of the building industry to supply.

### Scoring System

The Code uses a rating system of one to six stars and it differs from EcoHomes in several key regards outlined below:

- It is assessed at the level of an individual ‘Dwelling’.
- It contains minimum mandatory standards for energy, water, materials, waste and surface water run-off, which must be met before even the lowest of the Code levels can be achieved.
- It demands higher minimum standards for energy and water to be met before the higher levels of the Code can be achieved.
- It is performed in two stages with ‘Final’ Code certification taking place after the Post Construction Review has been carried out.

In addition to the mandatory requirements, each design category scores a number of percentage points. The total number of percentage points establishes a ‘star rating’ for the dwelling.

Level 1 (36 points); Level 2 (48 points); Level 3 (57 points); Level 4 (68 points); Level 5 (84 points); and Level 6 (90points).

### Objective

- It provides a framework within which home builders can be recognized for going beyond current Building Regulations on energy efficiency
- It sets standards for a wide range of other aspects of sustainability which are not mandatory in the Building Regulations but are critical to limiting the environmental impact of housing