



January 2019

Cardiff

Eric Richards

It is with sadness that I have to report that Eric Richards. FICConstM, Southern Region passed away on the 14th December 2018.

Eric organised his region Dinner and Dances also National Rallies over the years. He served as National President as well as Region Chairman, a long-standing member who supported all the rallies and local events. He will be sadly missed

Wales

These are the top six new building projects in Wales - and now they are in the running for a UK award.

The six projects have all already won their categories in the RICS Wales award, one of the highest awards for excellence in the field.



Now they are being entered the RICS UK awards and each has a chance to win in their respective categories.

The RICS Awards Grand Final will take place in London on November 2. These are the Welsh buildings going forward to that event in their categories.

RICS Wales said: "Cardiff University's Brain Research Imaging Centre (CUBRIC) opened in spring 2016. Housing a combination of neuroimaging equipment unique within Europe, CUBRIC continues to further its world-leading research which has already established Cardiff University as one of the UK's top three universities for psychology, psychiatry and neuroscience. "The new building has exemplary levels of safety from magnetic fields and for participants and patients, is a highly sustainable design achieving BREEAM Excellent ranking and in the short time since opening has been highly successful." The building also won Project of the Year in the RICS Wales Awards.

New NHBC Standards

The upsurge in the use of modern house – building methods of construction has played a key role in determining new NHBC Standards coming into force in January.

The new guidelines will come into force for new homes where the foundations are begun on or after 1 January 2019.

NHBC Standards 2019 will introduce the first major update to Chapter 6.10 'Light Steel Framing' (LSF) since it was first published in 2005. Interest from the offsite sector and



advances made by the light steel frame



industry have driven the review and focused attention on areas where guidance for the appropriate use of technology is needed.

The increased use of modular systems using LSF has resulted in Standards 2019 adding considerations to the stage 1 certification that should be considered in the manufacturer's system manual.

Chapter 6.2, which focuses on external timber framed walls and Chapter 8.1 - internal services in relation to boiler flow rates - have also been updated, along with a number of additional minor changes on a range of issues.

Homes England new Five-year plan

Modern methods of construction, the industry approved term for prefabrication, is set to be promoted by Homes England in its new five-year plan.



The government house-building agency also intends to provide financial support to smaller developers.

Homes England, previously the Homes & Communities Agency, has published a five-year plan setting out what it plans to do to help the government meet its target of 300,000 new

homes a year being built across the UK by the mid-2020s.

The plan lists five priorities: unlocking land, unlocking investment, increasing productivity, driving market resilience and supporting local areas.

The push for prefabrication comes under 'increasing productivity'. A requirement to use modern methods of construction (MMC) will be incorporated in Homes England leases, it says.

In the short term, Homes England plans to "support pilot projects where there is developer interest in testing MMC to learn lessons and understand costs". It will use development finance to encourage developers to put up prefabs to increase the capacity of the off-site manufacturing industry.

Over the next two years Homes England will provide up to £2.5bn development finance to smaller builders who are unable to access funding from banks through the £4.5bn Home Building Fund, it says. It will launch a Housing Delivery Fund with Barclays to provide £1bn of development finance to increase the pace and volume of housing delivery and support smaller builders. And it will increase its investment with Lloyds Bank in the Housing Growth Partnership to provide up to £220m of equity finance for smaller builders. Tender and legal documents will also be made simpler on smaller sites to make the bidding process easier, it says.

In the longer term, Homes England plans to deliver at least 2,000 starts on site by March 2023, 4,000 starts a year by the mid-2020s and 23,000 completions by March 2030 through its land assembly fund, which should be self-financing by March 2023.

It also plans to unlock public and private land with capacity for up to 27,000 homes by funding on-site infrastructure and land remediation through its small sites fund and use its local authority accelerated construction programme to bring forward surplus council land for up to 32,000 homes.

Homes England chairman Sir Edward Lister said: "Ultimately, we need to disrupt the housing market. Homes England plans to be bold, creative and think big. We hope the whole of the housing sector – big and small, up and down the country – will join us for the next five years and beyond."

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