

Please write to Robert Jenrick about raising the standards of new-build housing.

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jenrickr@parliament.uk

A 'real' letter has more impact but email is fine.

Can you please email me on contact@dorking-climate-emergency.net when you've done this? Just 'Yes' is enough.

And share, share, share: this is SO important.

This is taken from a letter written by Mole Valley's Cabinet Member for the Environment. Please use the info as you wish / add more etc. A straightforward copy has far less impact, so please add a few touches of your own especially at the beginning and end.

Thank you. You're wonderful. And you care about the future of our planet.

xPat

Dorking Climate Emergency



jenrickr@parliament.uk

The Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP

Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government

House of Commons

London SW1A 1AA

Dear Minister,

On June 30th the Prime Minister stated in his Build, Build, Build speech that we will 'build back better, build back greener and build back faster', and that he will 'insist on beautiful low carbon homes'. This makes it imperative to urgently raise the standard of the National Building Regulation regarding mitigating climate change. In particular part L.

Every local council has recently had to produce a Local Plan for future development in their area based on the need to provide hundreds of homes annually.

Making sure these are low carbon homes is made difficult by the weakness of the existing Building Regulations.

If the Building Regulations were made more stringent across the UK, regarding steps to mitigate climate change (e.g. insulation, emissions, building materials and building standard), this would assist in meeting the national targets.

One example of the restrictions local councils have come against is residential carbon emissions. For example Mole Valley District Council in Surrey have stated that 'new housing will be permitted where carbon dioxide emissions are reduced by a minimum of 20% below the Target Emissions Rate set out in the Building Regulations' (At present this is only 10%). Due to having to keep future developments viable they cannot aim higher, which has to be done to reach carbon neutral. If the National rate was raised and the whole country had to reach these targets it would force developers to build sustainably.

It would also bring down the cost of technology as it would be implemented countrywide. Developers would spend their energies looking for solutions rather than fighting local policy. This would bring all local Councils into line with each other and hopefully lower the cost of achieving this.

Local Councils also need to be able to stipulate that only sustainable/renewable energy sources can be used in new builds, wherever possible.

In The Energy Efficiency: Building Towards net zero Twenty-First Report of Session 2017–19 Report, Ordered by the House of Commons, July 2019, the waste of having to retrofit relatively new buildings was emphasised:

*122. When already faced with the challenge of upgrading the energy performance of the entire housing stock, **it is nonsensical to be continuously making the problem worse by allowing new homes to be built that will also need to be retrofitted.** Housebuilders receive billions of pounds in taxpayer support through the Help to Buy scheme.*

328. Barratt and Persimmon said that higher standards could viably be delivered within 18 months.

329. But with profit margins and shareholder returns the overriding priority for the majority of large housebuilders, they will not upgrade their standards without being required to do so by regulation.

(Sample end paragraph...)

We would therefore ask you to use your powers to immensely strengthen building regulations. Otherwise, more and more homes will be built below standard and will cost more in the long run, either to heat or to retrofit. And Boris Johnson's 'build back better, build back greener and build back faster' will have proved to be empty promises.