

Types of Self-Build and Custom Build Housing

Contractor Built one-off Home

This is the most common form of self-build. Here the home owner manages the design process including finding the land, hiring an appropriate consultant, and securing planning and building regulations approval. About half of all owners then hire a main contractor to do all the construction work; the other half project manage the construction phase and hire various sub-contractors to do the work. The owner might also do some of the simpler tasks such as decorating. Approximately two thirds of self builds are currently carried out this way.

Self-Built one-off Home

Here the owner follows a similar route to the method outlined above except that they then do virtually all of the construction work themselves. This is popular with people who want to take 'a hands on' approach and may already have experience of self-build. This method currently accounts for 10-15% of all self-build projects.

Kit or Package Home

The owner finds the plot of land and then works with a kit home company to finalise the plans. The kit company then supply and erect the house. Sometimes the self-builder just has a watertight shell built, and then does the fitting out work themselves.

Developer Built one-off Home

Here the owner finds a developer with a site and a design that meets their requirements, and the developer then builds it out for them.

Supported Community Self build

Here a group of people come together to share their skills and build a number of houses collectively. The group will normally all work on everyone's house until completion. Often these schemes include training to boost the participant's knowledge of building. Some community groups form themselves and some are co-ordinated by housing associations or other agencies. Over the last 20 years there have been almost 100 such schemes.

Independent Community Collaboration

Here a group is formed to acquire a larger site which is split into individual plots. They then organise the design and construction of their own home, sometimes collaborating with others to, for example, order materials in bulk. This is a common approach in Continental Europe, but is currently relatively rare in the UK. However, it is expected to grow in popularity.

Developer/Contractor led Group Project

A developer/contractor finds a suitable site then seeks a number of self-build clients and builds the homes to their specification under contract. Often the developer provides an option to just build a watertight shell, so the owner can 'self-finish'. An alternative arrangement is for the developer to offer serviced plots which are sold 'off plan' with a design and build contract.