Consumer Code for New Homes

Annual Report 2025

A reassuring presence for new home buyers

Foreword

Welcome to the 2025 Annual Report for the Consumer Code for New Homes.

Ongoing challenges across the housebuilding sector remain, however 2025 finally showed the start of a recovery for the industry, and the short- and medium-term outlook is positive. Further interest rate cuts are expected in 2026, which should increase consumer confidence as mortgage rates start to fall.

Membership of the Code in 2025 increased to 4,750 s. The number of new members in 2025 was over a third higher than 2024, with 1,251 new developers registering with the Code. We are pleased to see membership continuing to increase year on year, reflecting the view that the sector is slowly recovering.

During the year we received 4,390 requests for advice and support from consumers and developers, nearly a two thirds increase from 2024. 91 formal complaints were registered, and we supported 68 complaints through the IDRS process. 37 of these had judgements found in the consumer's favour, awarding a total of £74,422.04 to consumers, and directing that 433 separate issued were rectified by developers.

None of the work of Consumer Code for New Homes would be possible without the dedication and hard work of the Code Team. They have handled an ever increasing and varied workload whilst still providing a high level of customer service and personal support to both developers and consumers. On behalf of the board of directors, I would like to thank them for genuinely wanting to help, resolve disputes and making a difference for buyers of new homes.

Following the government announcement at the end of 2024 that they intend to proceed with a mandatory code of practice and an ombudsman scheme for the sector, there have been no further details or implementation time scales confirmed. We remain committed to working with government officials, other Approved Codes and key stakeholders on finding a solution that drives consumer protection further and builds on best practice and experience from within the sector.

I hope this year's report gives you a valuable insight into the work of Consumer Code for New Homes.

Sarah Langley

Sarah Langley
Managing Director

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About Us

Following a government review relating to service quality in the house-building industry, it was apparent improvements were required to improve customer services and protection for customers, and so the development of a code of conduct for new house sales was recommended.

Consumer Code for New Homes has been established to be of maximum benefit to consumers, and its ultimate aim is to provide a genuine commitment to consumers, to improve standards of construction and raise customer service standards in the New Homes market.

Consumer Code for New Homes Ltd was founded in 2015 and received Chartered Trading Standards Institute code approval in 2016.

The Code is supported by nine Warranty Bodies whose site surveying activities help to improve quality of construction in housebuilding:

Code of Practice

The Consumer Code for New Homes, approved by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute, is a mandatory Code for Members which has been established to ensure that best practice is followed by registered developers in respect of the marketing and selling of New Homes to consumers, and also sets expected standards for after-sales customer care service.

It has been established to be of maximum benefit to consumers and its ultimate aim is to provide a genuine commitment to consumers, to improving standards of construction and raise customer service standards in the new homes market, recognising that part of that commitment is providing consumers with a voice and a clear complaints process when things simply don't go according to plan when they buy a new home.

Consumer Code for New Homes establishes mandatory requirements that apply to all developers registered with the Code when they sell their new homes to consumers. The Code applies from the marketing stage through to two-year post completion of sale. The Code also benefits second and subsequent buyers of the new home but only in respect of after sales matters reported within two years of the date of the completion of the new home purchase.

Nothing contained within the Code affects a buyer's existing legal rights and does not replace any existing legislation regarding the sale and marketing of new homes to consumers.

The Code is underpinned by an Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme (IDRS) operated through CEDR Limited. CEDR is approved by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute as the 'competent authority' acting on behalf of the Secretary of State for dealing with disputes that are raised with the developer from the reservation date until two years after the date of Legal Completion. Buyers who think they have a dispute because a developer has failed to meet the requirements may choose to refer it to the Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme.

We proudly remain a Chartered Trading Standards Institute Approved Code, confident that the external accreditation of a tried and tested Consumer Code Approval Scheme framework gives us the external challenge and scrutiny needed to maintain our high standards and further develop the Code to continually address changes in buying and selling behaviours when it comes to new homes.

This ensures Consumer Code for New Homes remains firmly at the forefront of providing a highly effect Consumer Code for buyers of new homes and we are constantly reviewing the Code and processes, to find ways to improve.

Supporting buyers & raising consumer protection standards is central to everything we do.

Code Version 5 – Launched in January 2024

On 1 January 2024 we launched Version 5 of Consumer Code for New Homes. The changes were made based on customer feedback and our desire to raise consumer protection standards higher under the Code. The main changes to the Code included:

- Common Areas (including communal heating, sewage, and drainage systems) are now included within the Scope of the Code.
- Reservations now clearly require a 14-calendar day Cooling-Off Period.
- Developers must not offer financial incentives to encourage customers to complete on a new home which has not yet met warranty quality standards.
- Buyers now have the right to undertake a Pre-Completion Inspection and identify any snags which should be resolved prior to Legal Completion.
- There are updated requirements for what should be included in a developer's complaints procedure and the timescales by when customers can expect to receive a response to their complaint. Buyers' questions should now be acknowledged within five calendar days and responded to within a reasonable period.
- The Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme has increased the discretionary award for inconvenience up to a maximum of £2,000 (previously it was £1,000).
- Reservation Agreements must now include more detail about certain costs and should be accompanied by a more comprehensive suite of information.
- The information that must be provided to a buyer pre-contract has been clarified and expanded to include, for example, the detailed planning consent reference number under which the new home is being built, as well as the new home's expected energy performance standards.
- Any commission received by the developer, as a result of recommending suppliers (including financial and legal advisers), must be declared.
- There are a number of new and updated definitions of some terms which have special meaning within the Code - these have been updated to align with other codes in the sector and to be more accessible for consumers.

The Code Team prepared for the new Code launch by updating the website, adding clear signposting for the new version of the Code and issuing detailed guidance and updated training for developers.

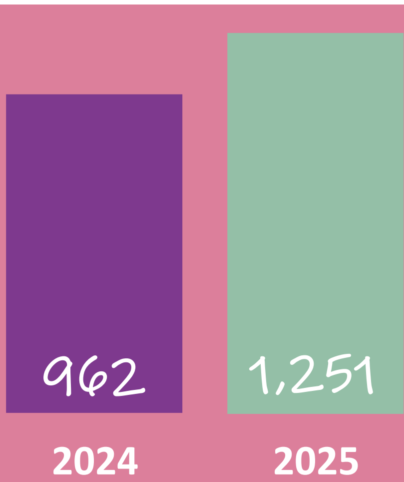
All Code templates and documentation have been updated to reflect the new Code wording.

A Year in Numbers

9 Warranty bodies support Consumer Code for New Homes as Code Users

433 separate issues rectified by developers as part of independent dispute resolution scheme awards

4,390 consumers and developers provided with advice and support by the Code's team



1,251

new members

30% increase on 2024

91

new consumer complaints registered

63

IDRS decisions issued

£74,422 awarded to buyers

4,750 Total Code Members since 2015

Code Membership

Developers who work with the one of the nine Warranty Bodies who support the Code, sign an agreement directly with Consumer Code for New Homes and agree to be bound by the terms of the Code of Practice. This agreement must be signed annually.

A developers' obligations under the Code start when the new homes are marketed for sale, and last until two years post completion of sale for each home.

1,251 developers joined the Code in 2025, bringing our membership to a total of 4,750 Code Members.

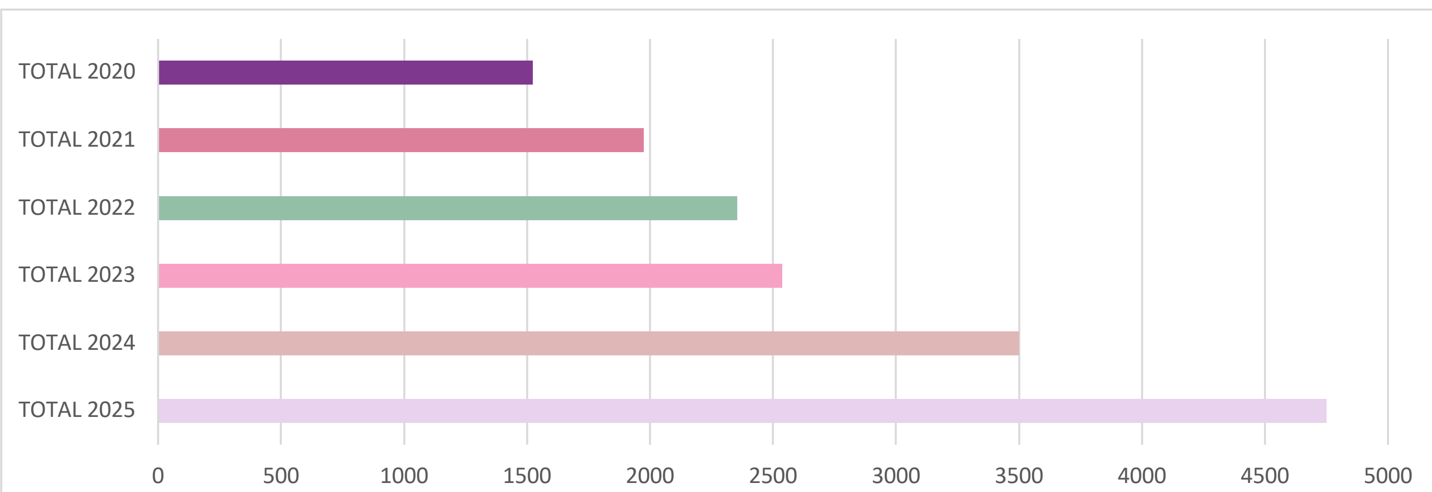
The number of new members registering in 2025 was 30% higher than in 2024. We are pleased to see membership continue to increase on previous years reflecting the view that the sector is slowly recovering.

To help developers comply with the Code, we have produced comprehensive guidance, along with providing standard templates and procedures covering the requirements of the Code. All of this information is readily available in the Code Members' Portal, accessible via our website. We also provide telephone advice to developers who ask for guidance and support with their customer service processes and compliance with the Code - we find this is a very important aspect of the running of the Code, particularly for our SME members who need additional support to help them comply with the Code.

The Code also provides online training for developer's staff who are involved in consumer facing marketing and after sales roles, regardless of whether the member of staff is employed by the developer or an agent. This has proved to be very popular with developers and agents since it is free of charge and is an accessible training option.

Code compliance audits of the membership base are carried out throughout the year. Audits are a mix of routine periodic audits, plus targeted audits focusing on specific areas of consumer complaints. It is very important that the high standards set under the Code are maintained and swift action is taken when a developer is not complying with the Code.

Membership Stats



Consumer Advice

A key part of the Consumer Code for New Homes is providing advice and guidance to consumers, supporting buyers who have purchased a new home built by a developer who is registered with the Code, when they are looking for advice and guidance on resolving issues they may have with their developer.

Part of the CCNH ethos is to provide an accessible and timely support service to buyers and as such, we are contactable via email or telephone during normal working hours.

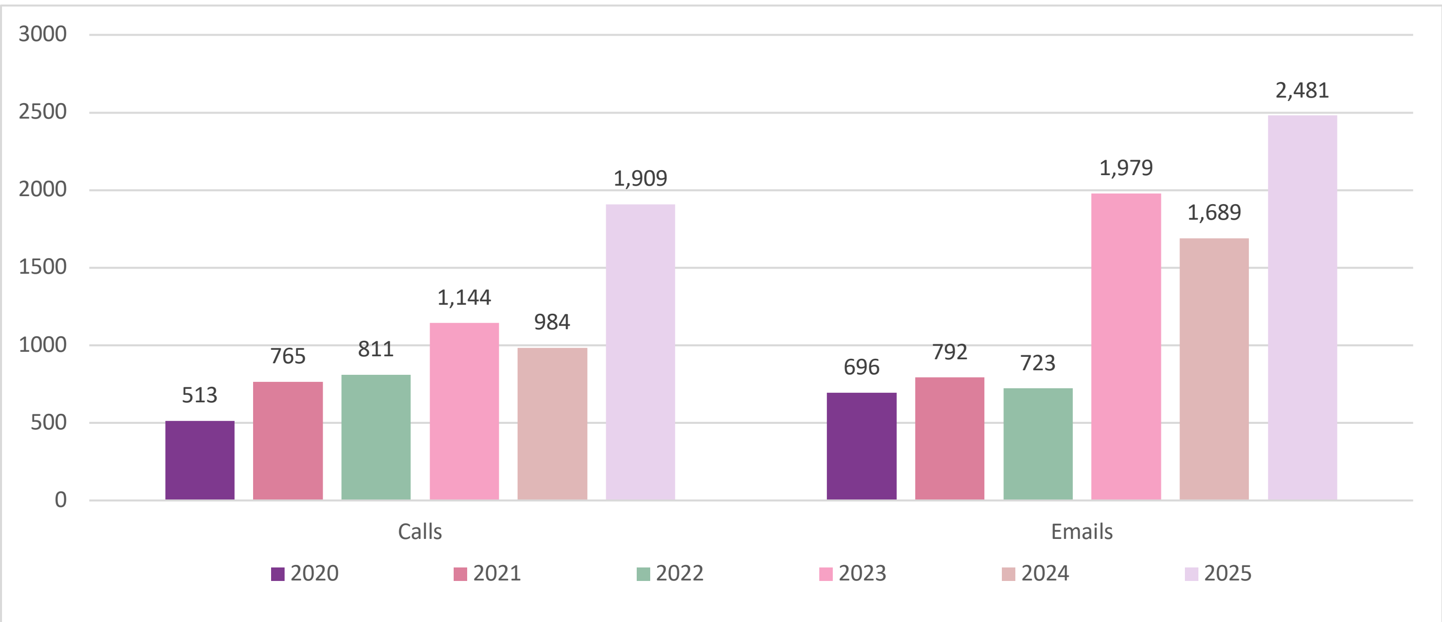
We monitor complaint types for trends and to identify if there any new emerging issues that need to be addressed. We also provide guidance to developers if there are emerging trends in complaints via mailshots and targeted advice.

Typical consumer enquiries and complaints relate to:

- Cancelling the new home purchase
- Completion timescales
- Snagging and defects (which are not covered by the structural warranty), post completion of sale
- Requests for general advice on how to make a complaint.

In 2024, Consumer Code for New Homes received 4,390 requests for advice and support from consumers and developers. This is a 60% increase from 2024, reflecting the increase in plots registered with the Code after the end of the Covid period and the increase in new members joining the Code in 2024 and 2025.

Enquiry Volume Stats



Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme

One of the fundamental aspects of the Consumer Code for New Homes is the provision of access to a free and effective dispute resolution scheme in the event that a dispute arises between a buyer and a registered developer which cannot be resolved informally. This can help to avoid costly and protracted legal action for consumers.

The Consumer Code for New Homes Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme (IDRS) is operated by the Centre for Effective Dispute Resolution (CEDR), an experienced alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provider in the New Homes sector.

Our scheme is independent of the developer and the warranty bodies, and any matter referred to the scheme concerns disputes under the Consumer Code for New Homes only. The adjudication is independent and conducted by a trained independent Adjudicator.

As a Code, we support both developers and buyers through the formal complaints process by answering procedure-related queries and providing advice on what evidence is needed to support either their formal complaint or their defence. After the final adjudication decision report has been issued, we follow up on any awards made as part of the adjudication and ensure they are honoured by the developer.

We firmly believe that it is important to support developers as well as consumers, through the IDRS process, not simply because many of our developer members are SMEs, but also because it promotes better awareness and understanding of the Code at grassroots level, and goes a long way towards improving outcomes for consumers, not just on a specific IDRS case, but in future for every additional new home that developer builds and sells.

The Code team spends a reasonably considerable amount of time following the adjudication award to ensure that all awards are fairly honoured. Routinely, we carry out a full audit of the developer if any Code non-compliance issues are highlighted by the Adjudicator and we also provide procedural advice and guidance to developers to help them to strengthen and improve their customer services processes and procedures if it is necessary.

The number of registered complaints received by the Code in 2025 was 91.

The number of formal complaints that were submitted to the IDRS was 68.

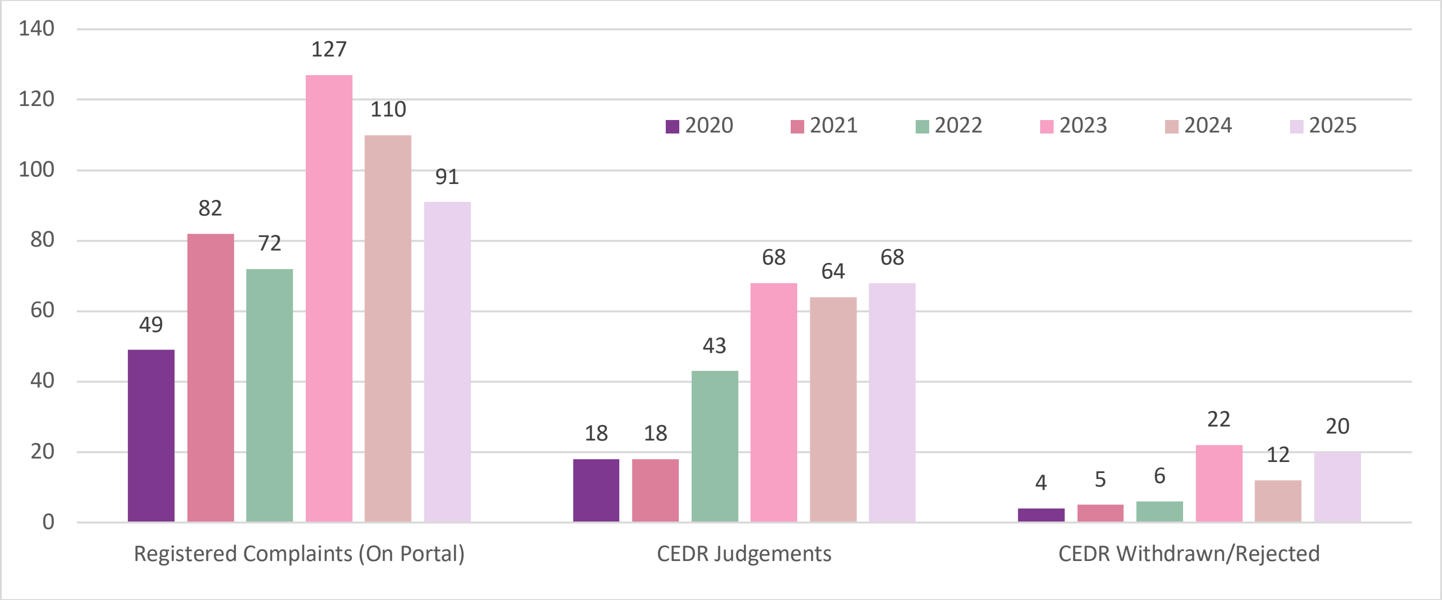
43 IDRS cases raised had a final decision issued in 2025.

Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme - CEDR Judgement Summary

To summarise, the key points were:

- 37 judgements (86%) found at least some of the areas of the complaint in the consumer's favour.
- 6 judgements (14%) found in the developer's favour.
- 13 formal complaints were withdrawn by the buyer and did not proceed.
- 4 formal complaints reached an early settlement between the buyer and the developer and did not proceed to the adjudication stage.
- 8 formal complaints were deemed not in scope of the Code and rejected.
- The main areas of complaint were issues with flooring, leaks in bathrooms, leaks causing damage to ceilings, patio doors not fitted correctly and poor decorative finishes in different parts of the new home.
- The total number of issues that developers were directed to rectify was 433.
- The total amount awarded to buyers was £74,422.04.

Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme - Stats



CCNH Case Studies 2025

Case Study A

The buyer stated that the developer had failed to rectify a faulty heating system and heat pump and had not provided a maintenance record for the heat pump. There were also unresolved issues of damp and mould.

The buyer requested that the developer replace the heat pump with a new one, rectify the faulty heating system, rectify the issues of damp and mould on walls, and claimed compensation for distress and inconvenience.

Adjudication Findings

The adjudicator found that the developer had breached Sections 4.1.1 and 5.2.1 of the Code (v4). The developer had failed to acknowledge and effectively investigate the buyer's complaint. The issues with the heat pump and heating system had not been resolved. The developer had also failed to issue maintenance records and the warranty cover for the heat pump.

Outcome and Buyer Award

The adjudicator directed the developer to take the following action:

1. Provide the buyer with details of the warranty cover and maintenance records for the heat pump.
2. Rectify the fault with the heating system and heat pump.
3. Pay the buyer £3,700 in reimbursement of the costs of installing an alternative heating system.
4. Pay the buyer £300 for distress and inconvenience.

TOTAL AWARD TO CONSUMER: £4,000 + remedial works

Case Study B

The buyer claimed that the developer misrepresented the new home, completion was delayed and there were a number of snagging issues The developer did not provide an adequate response to the issues raised, it had not accounted for the retainer fee, and some warranties and guarantees were missing.

The buyer requested an apology, £23,670 compensation, warranties for the boiler, garage and windows, contact details for the garage installer, and for the developer to engage with the request to return the retainer fee.

The developer had previously made a settlement offer to the buyer that was rejected.

Adjudication Findings

The adjudicator found that the developer had breached Sections 3.5, 5.2, 6.1 and 7.1of the Code (V4). The buyer was only offered an induction hob, yet the sales brochure referred to induction or gas hob - the sales brochure was not clear on this point. The buyer upgraded the hob to secure a gas hob. The completion was delayed and the evidence proved that updated completion information was not supplied to the buyer. The developer did not resolve the buyer's complaint in a timely manner. It did not supply adequate guidance on how to report snags, nor was the after-sales service comprehensive and accessible.

Outcome and Buyer Award

The adjudicator directed the developer to take the following action:

1. Apologise to the buyer.
2. Pay the buyer £319 for the gas hob.
3. Pay the buyer £1,400 to cover cost of remedial works to bathroom and living room.
4. Pay the buyer £1,000 compensation for inconvenience and stress.

TOTAL AWARD TO CONSUMER: £2,719.00 + an apology

Case Study C

The buyer said that the sale completion was delayed, there were many snagging issues that the developer did not resolve, and the after-sales service was poor.

The buyer requested the developer to carry out remedial work and pay up to £77,030 compensation.

The developer had offered to address the leadwork over the bay window, rectify the double-glazing issue and to apply a flocculant to the grass.

Adjudication Findings

The adjudicator found that the developer did not always comply with the requirements of Section 7.1 of the Code (V4) and the level of aftersales service it provided was mixed. It had not adequately remedied some issues and did not always provide a reasonable response to the buyer.

Outcome and Buyer Award

The adjudicator directed the developer to take the following action:

1. Pay the buyer £300 in reimbursement of the costs incurred in moving a kitchen light.
2. Pay the buyer £200 in reimbursement of the costs incurred replacing bathroom fans and vents.
3. Pay the buyer £1,000 compensation for inconvenience and stress.

TOTAL AWARD TO CONSUMER: £1,500.00 + remedial works

Case Study D

The buyer said that the developer failed to make good the remaining snagging items/defects that were reported.

The buyer requested that the developer rectify the outstanding items or pay compensation of £950.

Adjudication Findings

The adjudicator found that the developer breached Section 7.1 of the Code (V4). It failed to respond to the buyer's complaints relating to the outstanding snagging items.

Outcome and Buyer Award

The adjudicator directed the developer to take the following action:

1. Carry out the necessary works to resolve the issues with noise coming from the hot water system; the issues with the hot water pressure; to correct the alignment of the vertical bars within the double-glazing units at the rear of the Home; and to correct the issues with the front door.

TOTAL AWARD TO CONSUMER: Cost of remedial works

Case Study E

The buyer said that delayed completion caused financial loss and inconvenience. Specified items had not been provided as per the new home specification including bathroom lighted mirrors, turfed front garden and a wood burning stove. The developer had made an unfair and undeclared requirement for provision of heating oil to dry the new home. There had been misleading information about the flooring, unaddressed snagging and poor customer service.

The buyer requested a written apology and £16,277 compensation.

Adjudication Findings

The adjudicator found that the developer had breached Sections 2.1, 3.2 and 5.1 of the Code (V5).

The developer required the buyer to order and pay for heating oil ahead of formal completion and handover. The buyer was told this was so the oil boiler could be commissioned. It was not made clear that the oil would be used to dry out the new home prior to the sale completing and ownership passing to the buyer. The developer breached Section 2.1 of the Code.

The initial completion date was not met and the developer failed to provide realistic information to the buyer when the new home would be complete. The developer breached Section 3.2 of the Code.

The developer did not provide a comprehensive aftersales service and did not address the snags reported by the buyer. The developer breached Section 5.1 of the Code.

Outcome and Buyer Award

The adjudicator directed the developer to take the following action:

1. Apologise to the buyer in writing.
2. Pay the buyer £725 in compensation for inconvenience and stress.
3. Pay the buyer £290 for heating oil used to dry out the property.
4. Provide the buyer with a written timetable for inspection and resolution of snags.
5. Provide the buyer with a detailed response to the alleged snags, stating its conclusion in respect of each item. If it decides that the concern raised is within tolerances or for some other reason is not a snag, it shall additionally provide brief written reasons for its decision.
6. Carry out the snagging repairs that it accepts, including installing bathroom mirrors with lighting.

TOTAL AWARD TO CONSUMER: £1,015 + remedial works + apology

Disciplinary & Sanctions Panel

As a Chartered Trading Standards Institute Approved Code, Consumer Code for New Homes takes Code compliance seriously. The Code has a clear disciplinary process and has a range of sanctions that can be applied if a member of the Code fails to comply with the Code. The Disciplinary and Sanctions Panel consists of three independent Panel members.

Where a developer is found to be in serious breach of the Code, we can apply a range of sanctions, including financial penalties and removal from the Code's register of members. This will also result in removal from the registers maintained by the warranty bodies which support the Code. These sanctions shall be extended to exclude the registration of statutory directors of any developer which is sanctioned under the Code.

Any developer (or named statutory director) removed from the Code (and the registered members list of the warranty bodies) will not be permitted to re-join for a minimum period as stipulated by the Disciplinary and Sanctions Panel. Before reapplying they must be able to demonstrate that they have taken all the necessary improvement steps to comply with the Code in the intervening period.

To prevent developers trying to rejoin the Code under a different company name, the directors, shareholders and persons of significant control associated with the developer company are also included in the Code Disciplinary and Sanctions Panel sanctions.

We routinely inform the Chartered Trading Standards Institute of our Code Disciplinary and Sanctions Panel decisions. We also make sure other Codes in the sector are made aware of exclusions to prevent 'Code-hopping' (where a banned developer tries to join another Code in the industry).

Consumer Code for New Homes works hard on the buyer's behalf to secure any IDRS award made to them, and most developers do comply with the requirements. However, occasionally, a developer fails to comply with the Code, and formal action is needed.

The full list of banned companies and directors is displayed on our website at:

Excluded Developers | Consumer Code for New Homes

Key Priorities for 2024 – Progress Update

Consumer Code for New Homes reviews emerging trends and continues to develop new ways in which we can protect consumers further and ensure our Code members have the support and guidance they need to comply with the Code.

Below is a progress update for our priority areas for development in 2024:

1. Review the Code wording and Code Member guidance once the Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 comes into force, and Government issues business guidance.

   Progress Update: The Code and developer wording has been reviewed to ensure compliance with DMCC. Specific guidance for developers has been drafted in partnership with Kent Trading Standards, our Primary Authority. This guidance is now being reviewed by Government officials and will be published once signed off and approved.

2. Consider customer feedback to identify where the CEDR IDRS processes can be improved further to improve the customer journey.

   Progress Update: We have acted on feedback from both consumers and developers and improved the information interface and procedures between CEDR and CCNH to avoid delays in handovers of information for casework. CCNH now has a nominated lead for each case speaking to both the developer and consumer to speed up resolution of complaints and delivery of IDRS judgement awards.

3. Make any identified improvements to the Code Portal system to make resource savings, support Code compliance audits and make it easier for Code Members and Code users to use.

   Progress Update: There has been a system review of the portal. Based on feedback and requested there is now improved useability and increased self-service functionality for Code Users and Code Members. Code User sand Code Members can now add, delete and archive staff accounts. Code Users now have wider permission rights to amend and delete developer files and development plot information. Staff can now print an overall training completion certificate for CPD as well as a certificate per completed module.

4. Work with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Chartered Trading Standards Institute and other new build approved Codes to find a collaborative solution to the Government's aims of moving to a mandatory Code of Practice and Ombudsman Scheme based on best practice.

   Progress Update: Throughout the year we had regular meetings with CTSI and MHCLG. We have provided regular Code information and evidence to officials to ensure policy makers are kept up to date with the work of CCNH and provide real examples of how CCNH supports consumers and developers to support the development of evidence-based policy that raises consumer protection further. We have also provided evidence and data relating to complaint trends and Independent Dispute Resolution Scheme awards to buyers. We have also shared our views based on our experience of what support developers, and SMEs in particular, need to comply with the Code. CCNH attended Code roundtables and was in regular discussion with other Codes to establish how Codes can work together to protect consumers.

Key Priorities for 2026

Our priority areas for 2026 are:

1. Review and make any necessary changes to the Code audit programme and procedures to deliver internal efficiencies and deliver an effective audit regime to uphold the standards set by the Code.

2. Review developer guidance documents and identify any areas where additional guidance would be beneficial to ensure Code compliance and that developers deliver high levels of customer service to buyers.

3. Continue to champion new home buyers' rights in the new homes industry and new homes Code sector and work with Government officials and other Approved Codes to improve consumer protection in the new homes industry.

4. Work with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), the Chartered Trading Standards Institute and other new build approved Codes to find a collaborative solution to the Government's aims of moving to a mandatory Code of Practice and Ombudsman Scheme based on best practice.

A reassuring presence for new home buyers

Code Supporters

Consumer Code for New Homes

11 Milbanke Way, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1RP

T: 0333 900 1966 E: admin@ccnh.co.uk www.consumercodefornewhomes.com