

## HEADLINE

### **The benefits to new homeowners and house builders of using independent snagging services**

## SUMMARY

With over 160,000 new homes due to be completed in 2006, many built to increasingly strict deadlines, it is becoming less likely that each stage of construction will be properly checked and any defects rectified. As a result standards and quality inevitably fall.

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The quality of new homes is falling year on year. This is fact, based on statistics and surveys. The increasing number of homes built each year and the growing shortage of skilled tradesmen to build them will mean that the problem can only get worse.

In recent times, possibly due to a shortage of inspectors and/or the increased workload associated with Building Control inspections, the NHBC has been unable to inspect new homes as regularly and as thoroughly as they once did. Indeed, the current inspection routine is now confined to just five "key" stages. The regular weekly or fortnightly "warranty inspection" being confined to the past.

Site managers are increasingly now required to carry out new tasks or paperwork which are not related to quality or defect prevention but could be as a result of the ever burdening safety enforcement or a house builder's customer care policy or reporting procedures. Build programmes for new homes have been reduced over recent years due in part to better efficiency, but nevertheless a factor giving rise to the poor standards of the modern newly built home. The insatiable appetite of the City for greater numbers and profit from the major builders further adding to the problem.

As the site manager no longer has sufficient time to supervise and check the build quality with any degree of certainty and the NHBC is now confined to just five inspections per home, the professional snagging company is in a good position to offer the house builder a tailor-made service to suit their needs.

House builders will be able to state in their marketing literature that the new homes they build are "*fully and independently inspected and regularly checked at each stage of construction*". They could also benefit from defect feedback to identify areas or particular trades or contractors that are causing standards to fall.

The professional snagging inspector will have amassed a wealth of experience over the years and will be able to offer house builders dedicated training courses for their site management to increase their awareness of problem areas and a identify acceptable tolerances and standards.

Martyn Maxwell of Brickkickers says, "All too often I am called in by a new home buyer to check their new property and find it is far from complete with many defects. This then destroys any confidence the purchaser had with the house builder and can be the start of a long process of remedial work." Martyn is of the opinion that house builders have got to realise that it is their own reputation they are gradually destroying as well as the general public's confidence in the new home market which will ultimately affect their operating profits. "If house builders take the initiative and work with a professional snagging company standards and customer satisfaction levels can only improve can only improve"

If any house builders would like further information on the comprehensive services which are available from Brickkickers they can contact Martyn Maxwell at Brickkickers on 0845 226 6036 or visit their website [www.brickkickers.co.uk](http://www.brickkickers.co.uk)

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