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# GRAND DESIGNS

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**NEW LOOK  
MAGAZINE!**

**ALL YOU NEED  
TO CREATE YOUR  
DREAM PROJECT**

## How to build a home that's better for you!

The ultimate healthy building blueprint

**10** inspiring  
eco-friendly  
homes



**TVHOUSE EXCLUSIVE**

**'It's the smallest  
two-bedroom  
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# FIND THE PERFECT PLOT

ESSENTIAL ADVICE TO SOURCE & SECURE YOUR DREAM SITE



# Q How do I take advantage of Government help for self-builders wanting a plot to build on?



Property expert, social entrepreneur and TV presenter, **Kunle Barker**, offers his reply

Perhaps the most significant development for self-builders in recent years was the introduction by the government of the Self Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015.

This act obliges local authorities to maintain lists of people who want to build their own homes. More importantly, not only do local authorities have to maintain these lists, they are also obliged to make enough Serviced Plots (plots that are connected to electricity, water and waste services) available based on the number of people on the list.

If 400 people apply for plots, then the local authority must approve planning for 400 sites within three years.

This does not mean everyone on the list gets a plot, but your chances of getting a viable and desirable site are increased dramatically. These schemes are not available to developers, so individual self-builders will not find themselves priced out of the market – a common complaint in the past.

If your local authority is failing to maintain a Right to Build register or provide planning permission for sufficient plots within the three-year period, you should write to your MP. Providing sufficient serviced plots is a legal requirement and your local authority is obliged to abide by the law.

This legislation is great for the market as it has 'demystified' the idea of

self-build, which in the past has been seen as the pursuit of a wealthy few. Portals such as [righttobuildportal.org](http://righttobuildportal.org) and [localselfbuildregister.co.uk](http://localselfbuildregister.co.uk) provide a very easy and quick service for registering with a local authority – it takes less than 10 minutes to register your interest and you don't have to sign up with the authority in which you live, so relocation is an option.

Having said that, the legislation does allow local authorities to set additional eligibility criteria including a 'local connection test', but this must be publicised and very few councils have chosen to set these additional criteria, so check before you apply. You are also able to register as groups, so if you have

a few friends who have the same dream, why not apply for a larger plot and build your new homes together.

There has also been a rise in 'custom build', where big plots are run by large developers who in essence build

a house to your specifications. This option doesn't give you the freedom of a true self-build, but does mitigate a lot of risk associated with it, and can represent better value of money through the economies of scale enjoyed by these larger developers.

But now, some words of warning! Firstly, these plots are only available to people who are building homes as their primary residence and are not available for buy-to-let or development purposes. Secondly, the local plot registers are only open to permanent residents of the UK, the EEA (the EU plus Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein) and Switzerland. Local authorities will ask for proof of residence and citizenship. **GD**

**Providing sufficient serviced plots is a legal requirement**

● Look out for next month's build guide on budgeting for your self-build

## 3 RURAL PLOTS FOR SALE AROUND THE UK

These sites have bags of potential. Is one of them the start of your self-build dream?



### BOOTHBY GRAFFOE, LINCOLNSHIRE

This plot comes with full planning permission for the construction of a contemporary 4/5 bedroom home, with views over the Trent Valley. Guide price of £350,000, Savills Lincoln. (01522 508 908, [savills.co.uk](http://savills.co.uk))



### TURNBERRY, AYRSHIRE, SCOTLAND

This rural plot on the site of a former telephone exchange has planning permission for a three-bay, 1.5-storey property. It has views over the Firth of Clyde and Isle of Arran. Offers over £82,000, McSherry Holiday. (01563 533 121, [mcsherryholiday.co.uk](http://mcsherryholiday.co.uk))



### WILLINGHAM, CAMBRIDGESHIRE

Located 12 miles north-west of Cambridge, this plot extends to 689 acres and comes with planning permission for two, four-bedroom detached homes. £525,000, Cheffins. (01223 214 214, [cheffins.co.uk](http://cheffins.co.uk))

### ESSENTIAL CONTACTS

Plotbrowser ([plotbrowser.com](http://plotbrowser.com))  
 Plotfinder ([plotfinder.net](http://plotfinder.net))  
 PlotSearch ([plotsearch.co.uk](http://plotsearch.co.uk))  
 PrimeLocation ([primelocation.com](http://primelocation.com))  
 Rightmove ([rightmove.co.uk](http://rightmove.co.uk))  
 The Land Bank Partnership ([thelandbankpartnership.co.uk](http://thelandbankpartnership.co.uk))  
 Zoopla ([zoopla.co.uk](http://zoopla.co.uk))