

## NSBRC SURVEY 2024

In August 2024 we commissioned our **fourth annual survey** of our customers, in partnership with the National Custom & Self Build Association (NaCSBA).

We wanted to understand who are the people undertaking substantial homebuilding projects, what **motivates** them, and what **barriers** they are faced with.

**We had 721 responses.**



**We believe people deserve better homes. We can help you create a better home by delivering on our three key promises:**

- We'll **inspire** you by showcasing the very best building methods, trends and technologies.
- We'll **inform** you with our range of shows, workshops, courses and educational tours.
- We'll always offer **impartial** advice you can trust.

**The NSBRC is open six days a week (Tuesday to Sunday) all year round.**



**Age**

### 55-64

- **35%** were in this age bracket. (same as '23).
- **75.45%** are 55+.
- Just **11%** are under 45 years old.

The demographic has generally slightly increased in age from 2023.



**Reach**

### OUR REACH COVERS THE WHOLE OF THE UK

**Just ¼ of our audience** live in the **same Postcode area (SN)**, or that immediately surrounding (BA, BS, GL, OX, RG, SP) the **NSBRC**.

SN (NSBRC Postcode) = 51. Surrounding postcode areas (OX = 36, RG = 28, SP = 9, BA = 17, BS = 31, GL = 32). Other postcodes = 517 (72%). This has remained the same as previous two years.



**Income**

### £69,466

The average joint household income. One third (**33.7%**) earn **under £50Kpa** and a quarter (**25.1%**) earn **over £100Kpa**.

This average is a £2,075 increase on '23. This data needs to be read in the context of the age profile (with many retirees not receiving significant income from salaried employment).



**Employment Status**

- **36.89%** of our audience our **working Full Time** - either employed or self-employed.
- A further **16.23%** are **working Part Time** - either employed or self-employed.
- **One third (32%)** are **retired** with a further **10%** describing themselves as **semi-retired**.

**36.89%**

**16.23%**

**32%**



**Type of Project**

### 66.4% 2/3 ARE BUILDING A BRAND NEW HOME\*

Of those building a new home, **81.7%** are **self building** and **5.9%** are **custom building** (where you buy a prepared plot of land with existing services).

The remaining responses were converting properties into a home or undecided.

\*down slightly from 69% in 23



**Budget**

The budget for land and build shows a wide spread across the range.

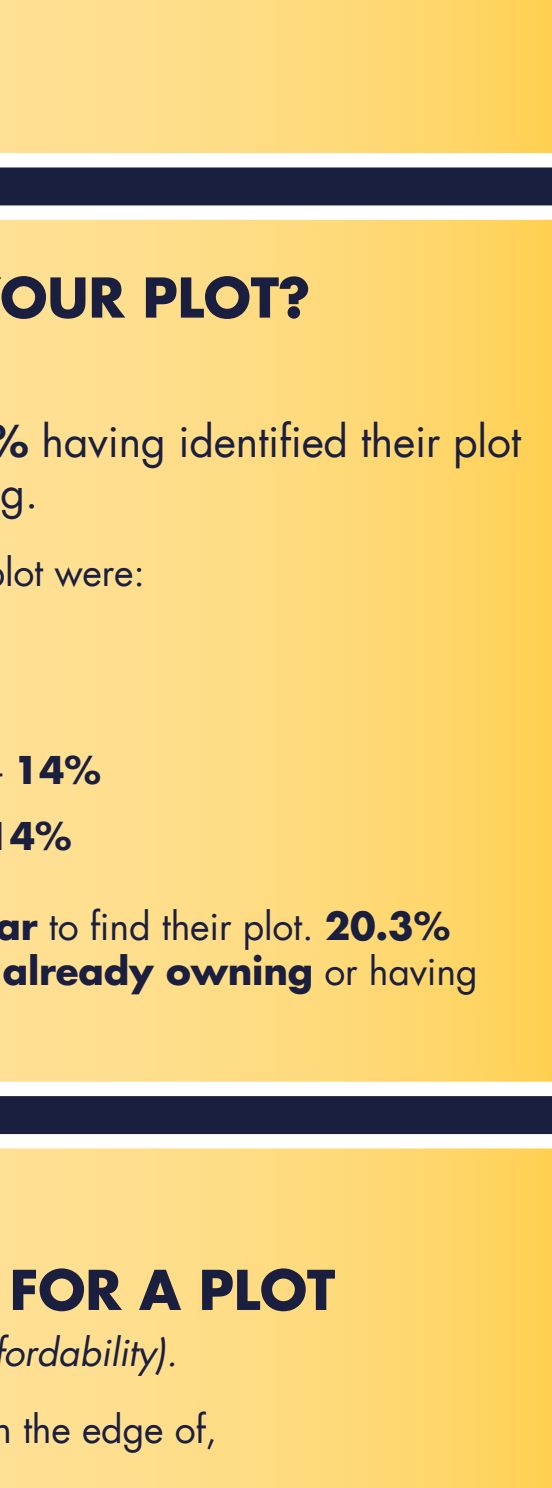
**Below £250K – 12.5%**

**£250 – £350K – 23%**

**£350 – £500K – 30%**

**£500K+ – 29%**

**£1M+ – 5%**



**2024:** The **'sweet spot'** in 2023 was between **£350K–£500K**. The trend is that this is increasing to nearer the **£500K** bracket.



**Funding**

The two most common **sources of funding** a project are from **savings (56.4%)** and **selling an existing home (47.1%)**. Often funding comes from a combination of 'pots' with **equity** in existing properties (**15.9%**) and **inheritance (13.2%)** two commons sources. **14%** of responses were using a specialist **self-build mortgage** (with staged/ advance drawdowns).

Of those borrowing, **20.5%** described their borrowing as **'substantial'**, **18.7%** borrowed a **'modest'** amount and **16.5%** were utilising **bridging finance** to allow them remain in the existing property (which would be sold once the new build is complete).



**Hands On**

### 46% EXPECT TO BE 'VERY HANDS ON' DURING THEIR PROJECT

This is an area where individuals can make cost savings during their projects, by providing their own 'free labour'.

**TIMBER REMAINS THE MOST POPULAR CHOICE FOR SELF BUILDERS.**

We asked which building system people were choosing to build with, and **Timber Frame** came out as the most popular system once again, with **25.7%**, followed closely by **prefabricated timber panels** (Structural Insulated Panels) at **20%**. Also popular are **traditional masonry (17.1%)** and **Insulated Concrete Formwork (ICF)** at **7.5%**. There was also a strong interest in sustainable materials and attaining 'Passivhaus' standards.

- Timber Frame – **25.7%**
- Pre-fabricated / Structural Timber Panels (SIP's) – **20%**
- Traditional Masonry – **17.1%**
- Insulated Concrete Formwork (ICF) – **7.5%**
- Others (including Oak, Straw Bale, Steel Frame, Hempcrete) – **10.7%**
- Undecided – **19%**



**Plots**

### WHERE DID YOU FIND YOUR PLOT?

(This was a new question for 2024)

**59.2%** owned their plots with **8.8%** having identified their plot and **one third (32%)** still searching.

The most common methods of finding a plot were:

1. Estate Agent / Auction – **25%**
2. Garden Plot or owned land – **19%**
3. Rightmove (similar property website) – **14%**
4. My own research in the local area – **14%**

It took **24.1%** of people **up to one year** to find their plot. **20.3%** took **one to three years** with **40.3%** **already owning** or having inherited the property.

**WE ASKED PEOPLE THEIR REALISTIC EXPECTATION FOR A PLOT**

(taking into account cost, location and affordability).

- **67.6%** would like to live within, or on the edge of, a **smaller settlement**
- **38.4%** would like a single plot in the **open countryside**
- **21.6%** would like to be part of a **larger urban settlement**
- **20.7%** would like to be part of a **smaller multi plot development (up to 20 homes)** within or on the edge of a larger settlement
- **6.9%** would like to be part of a plot **within a larger development (over 20 homes)**
- **23%** a **brown field** plot within an existing settlement



**Planning Permission**

### DO YOU HAVE PLANNING PERMISSION?

(A new question for 2024)

- **Yes – Detailed PP – 51.4%**
- **Yes – Outline PP – 8.6%**
- **No – Submitted but not yet granted – 16.8%**
- **No – 23.2%**

This shows the **committed audience** the **NSBRC** attracts – with three quarters of people in the planning process and over half with full planning approval.

### PERCEIVED LACK OF QUALITY IN UK HOUSING

**91.3%\* said if they could not self build they would not buy a new build property.**

Just **2.5%** would want a new build property built by a national housing developer!

(Local house builders have a slightly better perception, with **6.2%** selecting this option)

**46%** rather not move at all

**45.3%** would buy an existing (second hand) property

\*This is the same as 2023.



**Cost of Living**

### HAS THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS AFFECTED YOUR PLANN?

(energy price rises, interest rates, inflation and materials/labour cost increases)

**57.8% - Yes**

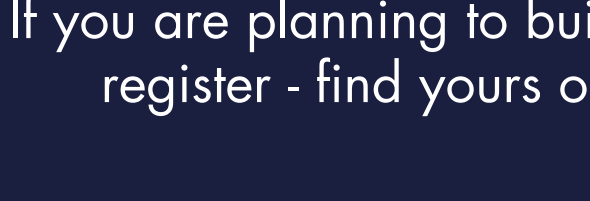
**42.2% - No**

Encouragingly, only **2%** had decided not to pursue a project – with a quarter of people planning doing more of the work themselves, to offset costs, **23%** opting to increase their budget to make the project work and **21.9%** downgrading the spec of their build to make it more affordable.

**Sustainability** is very important to self-builders, with **85% of people saying they'd budgeted for higher levels of insulation.**

**TOP SEVEN BUDGETED SUSTAINABLE ITEMS:**

- Higher levels of insulation – **85%**
- A sustainable heat source (such as an air source or ground source heat pump) – **71%**
- Micro renewables to generate energy (such as solar PV) – **67%**
- EV Charging Points – **60%**
- Battery Storage – **57.4%**
- Mechanical ventilation and/or heat recovery system – **57%**
- Triple glazing – **56.5%**



**100% Electric**

### WE ASKED IF PEOPLE AGREED ALL NEW HOMES SHOULD BE 100% ELECTRIC?

The broad opinion was **in favour** of this move, with **49.3%** agreeing (with 27.1% strongly agreeing).

**20.6%** **disagreed** (with 8.2% strongly disagreeing) and a third (30.1%) neutral on the subject.



**Policies**

We also asked if people felt the **new government policies** would make it easier for individuals to build their own home.

The jury was definitely still out on this – at the time we posed the question – with **60.6%** **unsure** and a **third (32.4%)** saying an emphatic **'no'**.

**A NOTE OF OPTIMISM...**

One third of respondents (**34.5%**) felt more optimistic than in 2023 about completing their project, with **42.9%** about the same.



**Top 3**

### TOP 3 MOTIVATIONS

- #1** To achieve **Higher quality** than a standard new build (4.6/5)
- #2** A more **sustainable and environmentally friendly** home (4.5/5)
- #3** A home **built to their exact specifications** (4.4/5)

(All the same as 2023)



**Top 3**

### TOP 3 OBSTACLES

- #1 Planning** (3.1/5)
- #2 Time** (3.1/5)
- #3 Finding a plot** (2.9/5)

(has moved from number 1 in 2022 to number 3 in 2024)

All down on 2023 – a sign of a slight upward shift in optimism?

## PROJECTS WITH EXISTING PROPERTIES



**33.33%** Improving an existing property

**32.89%** Extending and improving an existing property

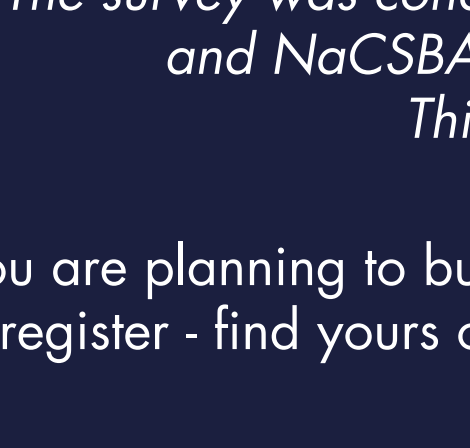
**23.25%** Purchasing and substantially renovating and improving an existing property into a modern home

**3.5%** are converting a property into a home for the first time

**50.4%** have a budget of **£100K+** with a further **14%** having a budget of **£50K plus**.

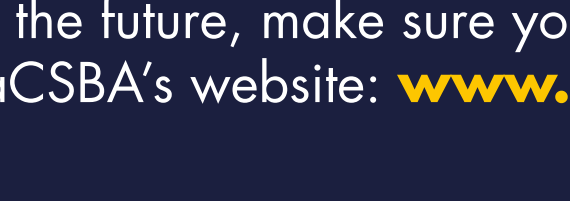
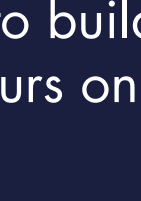
**75.8%** of Funding has come from **Savings**. **18%** of projects were largely being funded by the sale of an existing home.

## PLANNING



### HAD EXPERIENCED SPECIFIC PLANNING ISSUES:

- Policies not supportive of Self Build – **27.7%**
- Lack of response / resource – **25.7%**
- Inflexible officers / poor planning balance – **25.6%**
- Unwillingness to consider non standard designs – **18.8%**
- Bias towards large developments – **17.4%**



It was lovely to see that **53% of people had visited the NSBRC twice or more** and it is always a pleasure to meet people who first found us while plot hunting, who have gone on to create their **perfect homes**, often using our **fantastic exhibitors**.

**4.5/5**

**OUR SURVEY RATING FOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**

This compares to NSBRC Google rating of 4.7/5 from 710 reviews (at time of publication).



The survey was conducted by email in July/August 2024, sent to the NSBRC and NaCSBA databases, with a total response of 721 people. This compares to 759 responses in 2023.

If you are planning to build in the future, make sure you sign your local Right to Build register - find yours on NaCSBA's website: [www.selfbuildportal.org.uk](http://www.selfbuildportal.org.uk)