

Bosses build case to solve puzzle of UK's new homes target

Some of Britain's most influential company bosses are forming an industry group aimed at solving one of the country's most protracted infrastructure puzzles: how to achieve a target of building 300,000 homes each year while sharply reducing carbon emissions.

Sky News understands that Nigel Wilson, the Legal & General chief executive, and David Thomas, CEO of Barratt Developments, will be among the members of a body called the Building Back Britain Commission, which will be launched later this week.

The new group will be chaired by Terrie Alafat, the chair of Riverside Homes and a former director at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), according to insiders.

It will present ideas to the government in the form of a report later this year that will address ministers' long-held target of delivering 300,000 new homes annually by the middle of the decade, while demonstrating the value of the housebuilding sector to the wider economy.

The Commission will also publish a report ahead of November's COP26 climate summit in Glasgow focused on ensuring that emissions from the UK's residential building stock are rapidly reduced.

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WPI Strategy, a consultancy which earlier this year oversaw a series of recommendations from the Covid Recovery Commission – another group of senior private sector figures – is understood

to have set up the Building Back Britain group.

Its other members will comprise representatives from Mace, Thakeham Group and the National House Building Council.

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One insider said the Commission's reports would be written by Chris Walker, a former government economist who has previously worked in the Treasury and MHCLG.

An advisory group whose members will include the Green Finance Institute and Home Builders Federation will support its work, they added.

None of those contacted by Sky News would comment on Tuesday.