

Rt Hon George Osborne MP,
Chancellor of the Exchequer,
HM Treasury,
1 Horse Guards Road,
London, SW1A 2HQ



The UK Passive House Organisation

20th July 2015

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Dear Mr. Osborne,

We are writing to express our disappointment that the Zero Carbon Homes policy is being cancelled, despite the fact that the construction and property industries have been working towards this target for over ten years and the policy was passed into primary legislation earlier this year.

Passivhaus is the leading international low energy building standard, with standards for the building fabric in advance of the Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard of the Zero Carbon target. In fact, meeting the Passivhaus standard would take homes close to the proposed Carbon Compliance level of the Zero Carbon target and the expertise developed by our members in designing and building Passivhaus buildings in the UK has helped to inform understanding about how to deliver the Zero Carbon target.

Our 250 member companies, representing more than 30,000 employees, represent the most forward looking companies in the construction industry. They have invested heavily in the skills necessary to enable them to design and build Passivhaus standard buildings in the UK, and are consequently at the forefront in developing a skilled workforce able to deliver low energy buildings both in line with those required for the Zero Carbon target and beyond.

The Passivhaus Trust strongly supports the improvement of standards for the building fabric and has therefore supported the development of the Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard element of the Zero Carbon target. We have also shown that Passivhaus is a proven and very cost-effective method for meeting Carbon Compliance without the need for costly renewables.

We believe that abandoning all elements of the Zero Carbon target at this time, and in particular improvements to the building fabric, is a deeply retrograde step. As well as the obvious impact on CO₂ emissions, it will have a damaging impact on forward looking businesses, like our members, while offering no benefits in terms of the number or quality of homes delivered.

We would therefore urge you to reconsider your plan to abandon the Zero Carbon target and instead to retain the Carbon Compliance or Passivhaus target, which will help to support local businesses in the low carbon sector in the UK.

Yours sincerely,

Chris Herring
Chair, Passivhaus Trust