

BSG MEMBER CASE STUDY

# Ashford Homes

BSG

SUB-CONTRACTOR ASSESSMENT

ASHFORD  
HOMES  
(SOUTH WESTERN) LIMITED

*Crafting beautiful homes*

## BACKGROUND

Ashford Homes is an award winning housing developer based in Wiltshire. The company is well known for building luxury, high specification new homes throughout the South West.

## WORKING WITH SUBCONTRACTORS

Like many developers, Ashford Homes works with different sub-contractors from a wide variety of trades. To help maintain its excellent reputation, Ashford Homes carefully selects its sub-contractors to ensure its homes continue to be designed and built to the highest standards.

Critically, Ashford Homes must also make certain that any companies it works with are compliant with UK **health** and **safety** regulations.

## PRINCIPAL CONTRACTOR LIABILITY

As a Principal Contractor (PC), Ashford Homes has a duty of care to ensure that any contractor it appoints is **competent** to perform tasks **safely**, without **unacceptable risks** to other employees, members of the public as well as others on site.

Should an accident occur, through the negligence of a sub-contractor, Ashford Homes could also be liable if it did not take the necessary steps to appraise the company employed, and perform **management checks** to ensure that the agreed standards of operation are being carried out correctly.

Sub-contractors should only be allowed to carry out work on site if they have been vetted and approved by the Principal Contractor. Even if the same sub-contractor has been used for a number of years, Principal Contractors may still need to regularly assess them to ensure that their business is adhering to its legal obligations – as detailed in CDM 2015 regulations\*.



*“Using BSG’s ‘Contractor Assessment Service’ gives us ‘peace of mind’ knowing that our sub-contractors have been verified by qualified experts.*

*It helps to protect our business, but most importantly, helps to safeguard our workers and anybody else who could potentially be at risk.*

*BSG have also relieved us of the administrative burden of having to complete time consuming PQQs with sub-contractors. Which leaves us free to do to what we do best, ‘crafting beautiful homes in the South West’!*

Lee Dutton, Project Manager  
Ashford Homes

*\*A designer (including a principal designer) or contractor (including a principal contractor) appointed to work on a project must have the skills, knowledge and experience, and, if they are an organisation, the organisational capability necessary to fulfill the role that they are appointed to undertake, in a manner that secures the health and safety of any person affected by the project.*

CDM 2015: [Managing Health & Safety in construction L15](#)



The Building Safety Group

Ashford Homes decided that the best way to make sure it fulfilled its duties as a PC was to use a third party to assess the health and safety competence of sub-contractors, before awarding contracts.

This would also remove the requirement for Ashford Homes to carry out its own evaluation of sub-contractors using PQQs, which had become a time consuming and administrative burden for the business. In addition, passing this duty onto a third party would allow Ashford Homes to fully focus on its core competencies as a housing developer.

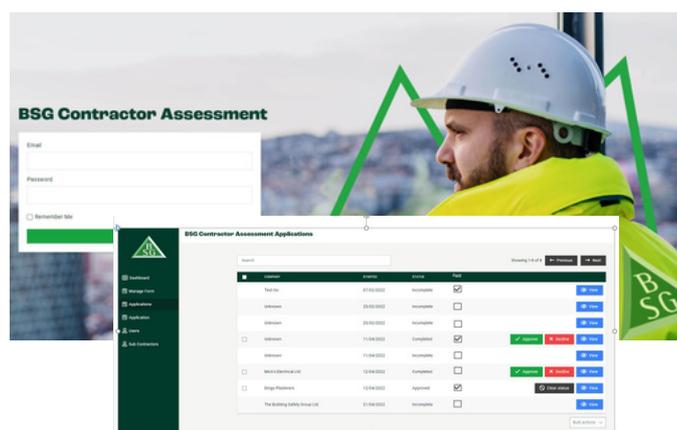
## THE SOLUTION: BSG CONTRACTOR ASSESSMENT SERVICE (CAS)

The Building Safety Group (BSG) was asked to determine if Ashford Homes' sub-contractors were compliant with current health and safety legislation, as well as guidance.

Companies that meet the required health and safety standards are approved to work with the home developer, using BSG's Contractor Assessment Service (CAS).

## HOW DOES THE SERVICE WORK?

Ashford Homes uses an online portal to invite the sub-contractors it would like BSG to assess.



Sub-contractors are respectively asked by BSG to complete a short, online questionnaire that will help to;

- Determine if the contractor is compliant with current health and safety legislation and guidance

- Clarify if the contractor's accreditations and qualifications are relevant to the task they intend to perform
- Establish whether a contractor can demonstrate relevant health and safety experience, and if its health and safety policy is suitable
- Obtain risk assessments produced by the contractor in the last twelve months, covering the full range of work activities pertinent to the job
- Compile details about a contractor's safe systems of work and / or method statements
- Gather information about the contractor's job / task monitoring arrangements
- Review and evaluate the information provided by the contractor to see if the company satisfies PAS 91

## THE OUTCOME

Ashford Homes regularly invites sub-contractors to register for BSG's 'Contractor Assessment Service' before a contract is awarded.

Those that register are vetted by BSG's senior advisers, who are Chartered members of IOSH. Ashford Homes will subsequently work with companies that are 'BSG Approved'.

Lee Dutton, Project Manager at Ashford Homes has been very pleased with the outcome: "Using BSG's 'Contractor Assessment Service' gives us 'peace of mind' because we know that our sub-contractors have been verified by qualified experts. This helps to protect our business, but most importantly, it helps to safeguard our workers and anybody else who could potentially be at risk". Lee added: "BSG have also relieved us of the administrative burden of having to complete time consuming PQQs with sub-contractors. Which leaves us free to do to what we do best, 'crafting beautiful homes in the South West'!"