



**WIG**

The Whitehall & Industry Group  
connecting the sectors



## 'Infrastructure' Series

Tackling the housing crisis through digital technologies and OSM

### Expert Insight

We were joined by Dr Gemma Burgess, Director, of the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research at the University of Cambridge to discuss the current housing crisis, Off-Site Manufacturing (OSM) and Building Information Modelling (BIM). She touched upon:

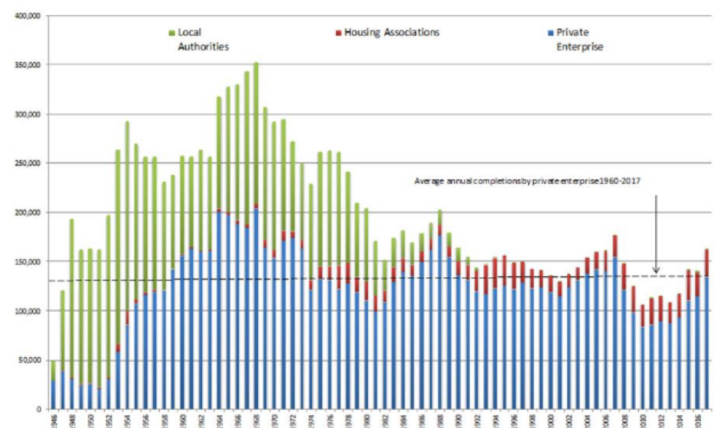
- The Industrial Strategy emphasises the need to move towards house building with more innovative approaches.
- The potential benefits of OSM and BIM is the possibility of building at scale: at a faster rate and at a higher quality, along with cost advantages from economies of scale, improved health and safety, increased sustainability and the potential to increase jobs in regional areas.
- There are constraints however, financial costs in particular. There is a high initial cost of BIM and lenders tend to prefer lower risk "tried and tested" methods. The industry structure along with organisational resistance and public demand also impacts this.
- Increasing awareness of OSM and BIM is needed to boost uptake, along with providing evidence to demonstrate the immediate and long term benefits.



**One third of PRS homes are considered "non-decent".**

**(DCLG, 2017)**

New house building completions in England, 1946 - 2017



### Our members' questions

Those who tuned in live had the opportunity to put their questions to Dr Gemma Burgess. Some of the big topics included:

- How can the choice of building materials in OSM make a difference, especially within increased overheating in summer becoming as concerning as keeping warm in winter.
- To what extent can digitalisation enable factories to bring together traditional but modern methods in construction.
- International examples and what we can draw and learn from others.
- How do we collaborate more effectively between industries to work together
- If there is anything that can be done to better accommodate decision makers to take bigger risks going forward.

WIG members can listen to Gemma's presentation [here](#)

To see our full programme of webinars, visit [www.wig.co.uk](http://www.wig.co.uk)