Oral Question

Sarah Wollaston (Totnes, Conservative)

My Constituency is home to Transition Town Totnes, which has a great interest in sustainable development. If the planning process for community land trusts is to be streamlined, provided that 90% of residents are in favour of a proposal, will the Department clarify how that 90% figure will be ascertained and how the low-carbon building agenda will be upheld so that we meet our commitments to cut emissions?

Grant Shapps (Minister of State (Housing and Local Government), Communities and Local Government)

I will gladly answer my Hon. Friend, Mr Speaker,

The 90% threshold is subject to a simple referendum of the people in the local community, parish or village. The idea is that the judgment should be made through the ballot box by those who go to vote. The buildings themselves will be judged against the criteria of sustainability codes 1 to 6, and the sustainability levels that will be required will be exactly the same as those for all buildings by 2016.

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