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## Creating the Plastic Free Home | Industry Challenge

*(Virtually)Plastic-free electrical insulator for domestic wiring*

**Deadline for ideas: 7<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

As part of its commitment to creating environmentally friendly homes, Accord Housing has won European Funding (Interreg NWE) for a trial to build 12 plastic-free houses. The European project, CHARM (Circular Housing Asset Renovation & Management), is a partnership with academic and social housing organisations in UK, Belgium, France and the Netherlands: thus providing contacts and opening up potential business opportunities in Europe for our suppliers.

One major issue for us in meeting our objective is the supply of a **(virtually) plastic-free electrical insulator** for the wiring in the new-build homes. We are therefore launching **an industry challenge** to find suitable new innovative solutions, product(s) and supplier(s) using more natural materials or less plastic with two objectives.

### *1. Initial specification reducing or eliminating plastic from domestic wiring*

We are looking to specify wiring for 12 virtually plastic-free homes by the end of **March 2020**.

We would initially be interested in solutions that may include materials such as:

Natural rubber                      Porcelain                      Cotton                      Mycelium  
Other (mineral insulated metal clad / mineral insulated copper clad)

All solutions must comply with the 18th Edition IET Wiring Regulations (BS 7671:2018), published in July 2018 and came into effect in January 2019. These are often implemented and certified by contractors under NICEIC and ELECSA, trade bodies which provide assessment and certification services for contractors working across the building services sectors. Particularly here this relates to Building regulations Part P: electrical safety in dwellings.

**All solutions identified will be considered by an independent industry panel which will convene in late February and which will then draw up the technical specification for a procurement that will be launched in March/April 2020.**

### *2. R&D opportunity to eliminate plastic from domestic wiring*

Over a longer period, CHARM is seeking to find a range of fully plastic-free and environmentally friendly solutions for volume house building programmes. These solutions must comply with the regulations, and as part of the programme we are interested in how regulations would need to change to make this possible. Our aim is to find business partners with whom we can work over a longer period and we will be seeking additional funding and support for essential R&D and development work which could be available to your business.

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**For more information:** please contact our procurement and industry challenge specialists: Pat Laughlin from Midlands Environmental Business Company – [patl@ebc-info.co.uk](mailto:patl@ebc-info.co.uk) or Rosemary Coyne from Sustainable Housing Action Partnership – [co-ordinator@shap.uk.com](mailto:co-ordinator@shap.uk.com) who will assist you with the process.

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**A CHARM Project Awareness Event will be held on 19 February 2019 in Birmingham. Please visit [www.shap.uk.com/events](http://www.shap.uk.com/events) for more details.**