

October 2007 PROCESS NOTE

RE:

General Information: New rating level of BREEAM Outstanding

Process Information: Offices report template, New query procedure, Code template, Bespoke assessor training

Technical Information: Code

This note is sent to the main contact in your organisation. Please ensure that this information is copied to all other EcoHomes/BREEAM assessors within your organisation.

The following contains important information and news regarding all of our BREEAM Schemes.

General Information

We recently told Assessors about our exciting new initiative – ‘BREEAM OUTSTANDING’ . This will be an additional scoring category on the BREEAM scale designed to encourage developers to go beyond EXCELLENT and build the exemplars of the future.

We have already produced a list of characteristics and requirements that differentiate a BREEAM OUTSTANDING building from a BREEAM EXCELLENT building, but we will be carrying out some detailed piloting and testing in the Autumn to fine tune our initial ideas. Very briefly we will be considering the following features / attributes:

- Setting mandatory levels of performance in all sections
- Aim to recognise designs that exceed current credit requirements
- Setting a higher rating level
- Aim to encourage the testing of innovative, unproven products and technologies
- Require a Post Construction Review

If you do not have a potential pilot but are still interested in contributing ideas etc we will be issuing further updates once more detail has been established and inviting all assessors to comment.

Process Information

BREEAM Offices Report template – minor change

Please note an amended version of the report is now on the extranet. This corrects a minor error within the T5 credit criteria section. The award of the second credit was stated as being ‘*dependent on adequate provision of showers and changing facilities*’. This should have stated ‘*adequate provision of changing facilities or a dedicated drying space for wet clothes*’.

New Query Procedure

The procedure for handling calls on technical enquiries has changed to enable us to provide a more timely response.

- When you call the helpdesk your call will be passed to the Helpdesk Assistant
- The Helpdesk Assistant will take the details of your enquiry (to enable one of our technical consultants to provide an answer).
- You will be given query reference number, which you should use in all future communications regarding the same matter.

Our aim is to respond to straightforward questions within one working day. If the query cannot be fully answered within this time (e.g. more information is required, or the query

requires detailed technical consideration), you will be sent an email stating the expected timescale for our full response. All responses will be by e-mail so that they can be easily tracked and used in your records.

The benefits of this new system are that:

- someone will always be available to take down the details of your call
- queries will receive more timely responses
- our responses will come by email so can be used in your records
- responses can more carefully monitored to ensure consistency and inform the new FAQ's section of the Extranet/Web-site (currently in development)
- the tracking system will flag up quickly outstanding queries to the point where our response has been successfully delivered

Revised Code Guidance

A draft revision of the Code Technical Guide was sent to domestic assessors on 7th September and feedback was requested. All comments received have been considered and incorporated where appropriate. The final version is now awaiting approval from CLG. As soon as this has been granted it will be circulated to all assessors.

Code Report Template Update

The plan is to have a fully operational web based system that will allow for report tracking and submission online ready by April 2008. Until then, the process for submitting Code reports is outlined below:

- **Register your Code scheme**
- **When you reach report completion stage:**
 - Request a copy of the report template
 - You will be contacted to determine when the report is likely to be submitted (this will help us plan our resources).
 - You will then be sent the report template with instructions
 - Additional support will be provided (if required) to help you to fill it in
- **If you want to use the template again, check with us first as**
 - we may have made amendments to the version you first used
 - it helps us to plan resources

Bespoke BREEAM Assessor training update

The Bespoke BREEAM Assessor training process has been updated. The new format of training is outlined in detail in the attached document. The prequalification requirements for Assessor training remain broadly the same. The only change is that becoming a Code for Sustainable Homes Assessor is now accepted as an alternative to becoming an EcoHomes Assessor (as a method of meeting the pre qualifications)..

Technical Information

Code: MAT 1 – Environmental Impact of Materials

Credit MAT1 – Environmental Impact of Materials states that if a building element is re-used in-situ, (e.g. foundations or a wall), it will automatically receive an 'A+' rating.

If a building element is re-used from another site it is necessary for the element to receive a bespoke environmental impact rating from the BREEAM materials team (contact details BREEAMMaterials@bre.co.uk). The likelihood is that building elements re-used from alternative sites will receive an 'A' rating.

Code: Guidance on Projects Including Refurbishment Works

The Code for Sustainable Homes is not appropriate for assessing refurbishment schemes and as such should not be used to assess buildings where there is any refurbishment element. In such cases EcoHomes should be used to carry out the assessment

In the case of a development where there is a mixture of new build dwellings and refurbished dwellings in separate buildings it will be necessary to carry out assessments as follows:

- New build buildings – Code for Sustainable Homes
- Refurbished buildings – EcoHomes