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Major Plans Announced for BREEAM Sustainable Building Standards

BRE Global will be launching **BREEAM Energy Star**.

BREEAM Energy Star is the latest change to the BREEAM family of sustainable building standards, which are continually updated to make new and existing buildings more sustainable and cost-effective from cradle to grave. The rating, which will be offered as an optional item on BREEAM certificates for Offices and other commercial buildings, is derived from the assessment evidence already collected by assessors. Guidance will be circulated to assessors setting out the procedures that will be applied prior to the launch.

Martin Townsend, the new director of BREEAM, says that BREEAM Energy Star will encourage the design innovation necessary to achieve the Chancellor's policy objective of zero carbon non-domestic buildings by 2019.

"The BREEAM family of sustainability standards we are developing also includes BREEAM Communities for urban developments - developed jointly with the RDA/RAs and leading international urban planners - and BREEAM In-Use, designed to reduce costs and improve the sustainability of a building's operation, which will replace the existing BREEAM Management and Operations versions when it is launched in early 2009. The aim of the BREEAM family is to provide a comprehensive and integrated set of sustainable building standards that are based on robust scientific evidence and developed through consultation with industry and with strong market engagement," said Townsend.

Setting out the shape of things to come, Townsend described other aspects of the multi-faceted BREEAM family which will soon include:

- schemes for Responsible Sourcing of construction materials developed with major manufacturers, sectoral trade bodies and the Construction Products Association
- an LCA toolkit
- simplified assessment criteria and processes for smaller and simpler buildings within the current schemes
- standards to cover new building types such as Higher Education.

Chairman of the BRE Trust, Sir Neville Simms, commented:

"So much progress in such a short time reflects our strength in depth and breadth. This is built on the success of our rapidly growing existing schemes, and which have enabled developers and constructors to independently demonstrate their commitment to building a more sustainable future."

"The BREEAM approach has been copied worldwide because it works, is based on sound evidence, is independent of sectoral interests and can be adapted to different markets and climates. With the new BREEAM Energy Star and expanded family of standards, we are setting a cracking pace."



BREEAM Healthcare XB

We have recently launched the self-assessment scheme BREEAM Healthcare XB as a means for NHS Trusts and other healthcare organisations to assess existing healthcare buildings in operation. To use the scheme, individual Trusts will pay an annual membership fee to BRE Global. The membership fees will be based upon the size of the Trust and level of support chosen. The Trust can then use the tool to assess all buildings within their portfolio. If a Trust wishes to gain third-party certification of an assessment, they will need to appoint a licensed BREEAM Healthcare assessor (at an additional cost).

The scheme covers management and operation rather than design issues. It is anticipated that BREEAM Healthcare XB will be used alongside BREEAM In-Use once this becomes fully operational.

For further information on BREEAM Healthcare XB, including the membership pricing structure, please visit the website:

<http://www.breeam.org/page.jsp?id=114>



Information on applying for BREEAM 2008 Innovation Credits

Innovation credits provide additional recognition for a building that innovates in the field of sustainable performance, above and beyond the level that is currently recognised and rewarded within standard BREEAM 2008 issues.

There are currently two ways in which an assessor can award an Innovation credit under the BREEAM 2008 version. The first is by complying with the exemplary performance levels that form a part of existing BREEAM issues (see section 2.0 'Scoring and Rating' of a scheme manual for details on which issues have defined exemplary performance levels). The second route is where an application is made to BRE Global by the BREEAM assessor to have a particular building feature, system or process recognised as 'innovative'. If the application is successful an *Innovation credit* can be awarded.

BREEAM Assessors should note that the application form and additional guidance for the second route will be available from the BREEAM Assessor's Extranet from mid-October for download. BRE Global will start accepting and processing applications from 1st November 2008. Processing an application for an Innovation credit and confirming the outcome will typically take around four weeks from the point at which BRE receives the form, and there will be a charge for each individual application (the details of which will be published on the form).



Charges for Re-issue/Additional Certificates

The certificate request form and development details pages within each assessment report are used to provide the certificate details (full address including post code and plot or house numbers etc.) that are shown on the certificate, and the number of copies of a certificate required.

After the original certificates have been issued (based on the details provided in the report and number requested), if we receive a request to re-issue certificates, either for amendments to the details or for additional certificates, there is an additional charge. This charge is payable each time a new request is made for an amendment or for additional copies.

For BREEAM Non-Domestic schemes and EcoHomes the charge for each re-issue is £100 plus VAT per development.

For the Code for Sustainable Homes, a minimum charge of £100 per development will be incurred, plus £10 for every additional certificate, i.e. 1 certificate would cost £100, 2 certificates would cost £110, 3 would cost £120, etc.

These fees may be revised from time to time, so please check against the Fees Sheet (Document FS 036) on the extranet for current details.

Additional charges will be included in the assessor monthly certification fee invoices. We do not normally accept direct requests for additional certificates or issue invoices for payment to assessors' clients.

To avoid unnecessarily incurring these charges please ensure that the certificate request form and development details are correct before submitting your report.

Biofuels

We wish to provide further clarification on the use of biofuels within BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes (Code). Energy 5: Low or Zero Carbon (LZC) Technologies, in the BREEAM 2008 guidance manual and Ene 7: Low or Zero Carbon (LZC) Technologies, in the April 2008 version of the Code Technical Guidance, indicate that biomass is a suitable fuel type for use in LZC technologies but do not mention other biofuels.

Only second generation biofuels can be included within the list of recognised LZC technology fuel sources in BREEAM and the Code. Second generation biofuels are defined as biofuels made from non-food materials and waste.

At this stage, the decision to allow only second generation biofuels in BREEAM and the Code has been taken, as Government policy in relation to first generation biofuels is currently under review. Given the uncertainty over the impact of first generation biofuels on biodiversity and global food production, BREEAM will wait for this review to be completed before deciding on future policy relating to this issue.

Accordingly, BREEAM will continue to monitor 'current thinking' and ensure that the LZC technology fuel sources reflect changes within the sector. BREEAM guidance will be amended as is necessary and changes to the Code Technical Guidance will be recommended to Communities and Local Government (CLG) as appropriate.

It is worth clarifying that fuel types can be recognised within BREEAM, EcoHomes and the Code for Sustainable Homes only where a generic carbon intensity factor can be identified. Supplier-specific data cannot be used for the purposes of assessment as these may change. It is also not possible to take account of LZC fuels which are directly interchangeable with fossil fuels, as carbon savings cannot be guaranteed into the future.



Domestic Assessor Day: 5th November

This year's assessor day for domestic BREEAM and Code assessors will be held on 5th November at BRE, Watford. The day is to include:

- Presentations from representatives of Industry
- Additional training in areas of the Code and EcoHomes Technical Guidance found to be challenging (in response to feedback - see below)
- An update on BREEAM processes and QA issues
- An opportunity for assessors to provide feedback on technical and operational issues

A more detailed agenda, together with an invitation, will be sent out to all licensed domestic assessors via email later in the month. For the time being, we ask assessors to give 5-10 minutes of their time to an online questionnaire aimed at understanding which areas of the Code and EcoHomes Assessors would most welcome additional guidance in.

The questionnaire can be accessed here:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=kVqibb8hFm8ypgYjkQIBbw_3d_3d

Please pencil the date into your diaries; we hope to see you at this constructive and positive event in November!

BREEAM Award Winners

The eight BREEAM award winners for 2008 were announced last week by BRE Global's Director of BREEAM, Martin Townsend, at the 100% Detail exhibition.

For full details on the winning developments, please visit the BREEAM Awards page on the BREEAM website: <http://www.breeam.org/page.jsp?id=97>