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Energy Performance Certificates - Something every Chartered Surveyor should be ready for.

As national energy efficiency week approaches, it is an appropriate time for property professionals, to consider the impact that energy performance certificates will have on our professional lives- from new build to conversion, from selling a property to renting one, from dealings in residential to commercial properties.

There is a general lack of awareness among practitioners of the impending requirements to advise upon energy issues, the provision of energy certificates will include advice on enhancing the energy performance of buildings – all of this is interlinked with the revision of Part L of the building regulations due to come into force in April 2006.

Energy certificates will be a significant part of a surveyors future role and it will be essential as in all matters that professional advice and recommendations are made. Chartered Surveyors will be directly involved with energy inspections and provision of Standard Assessment Procedure [SAP] ratings.

In order to carry out an energy inspection it will be necessary to train and show competence in the skill sets required. This applies even if an individual has an existing SAP qualification – the reason is that a new methodology has been drawn up which forms the new standard.

In fact due to the complexity of different building types there will be a number of different appropriate methodologies. The first to be developed will be the one most surveyors will come into contact with – known as the Reduced SAP rating or RdSAP.

Chartered Surveyors will have to look at energy efficiency from the different standpoints of landlords, tenants and statutory users.

Energy certification of buildings will change the property market, because the efficiency of various buildings will be for the first time directly comparable through a simple rating scheme- not dissimilar in its result format from the colourful label that one sees when comparing electric appliances at a retailer. This type of rating has proved such a success that it is being introduced to rate new cars as well as buildings.

This easily understood ratings method would mean energy efficiency transparency. It will also mean close scrutiny can be given by potential occupiers and owners.

Occupiers- after all as we all know energy costs are rising and will continue to do so, therefore why move in to a high energy cost building?

Investors- they will require a building to be attractive to potential occupiers and energy certificates will be another factor in the list of requirements.

Corporate or Statutory users- would these users like to be seen occupying an energy inefficient building? Bear in mind that there will be a statutory requirement for any building over 1000 square meters to display the building's energy certificate in the Foyer.

In the UK there was a general approval when our Government signed the Koyoto Protocol. The subsequent European Performance of Buildings Directive received little public attention, however it sets out the requirement for energy rating of buildings in a much more detailed way than Part L of the building regulations currently provides.

However the general public, companies and statutory concerns are conscious of adverse affects on the Environment and the links to climate change and they will be increasingly aware of ever rising utility bills and they will look to professional advice to not only rate a building, but advise on ways of improving it's energy efficiency.

It will be necessary every time a building is sold, or rented, that an energy certificate is provided – that certificate must not be more than ten years old.

In the residential housing market the introduction of the 'Home Condition Report' that will form part of the 'Home Information Pack' will include an Energy Rating and advice. Part of a Home Inspectors training includes energy training and qualification under the NVQ Diploma in Home Inspection. As readers will undoubtedly be aware the dry runs will start in July 2006 and it is proposed that the scheme be formally introduced in January 2007.

It has also been proposed that when a building is improved, extended or refurbished and the cost exceeds £8,000 that an automatic requirement will be that an additional ten percent (of the cost of the work) will be spent on improving the energy efficiency of the remainder of the building. At the time of writing the Governments formal announcement is awaited upon implementation.

Energy matters are increasingly being commented upon in the property press and general media and this is likely to increase as the recently published European green paper on energy efficiency becomes more widely appreciated.

Europe faces the prospect of having to import up to 70% of its energy by 2030. The objective to reduce energy consumption by 20% by 2020 is a serious one that has already been committed to. It is already apparent that one way of achieving significant reductions is the successful implementation of the directive on the energy performance of buildings and in turn that means energy certificates.

In the course of the next few years the general public will become familiar to making choices on an energy rating under a standardised scheme whether it be an electric appliance, a new car or a building to own, rent; occupied by a statutory body or corporate organisation.

Energy certificates will create a direct link between an individual building and the environment- it is estimated that approximately 50% of Carbon Emissions are created by buildings- It will therefore be for the building industry and the energy surveyors to play a significant part in the reduction of CO2 emissions and is it too dramatic to say that energy surveyors will play their role in helping to save the planet?



UK Energy Surveyors Ltd was set up in 2004 with the specific purpose of providing energy certificates through its national network of energy surveyors.



UKES are delighted to announce the launch of our sister company UK Home Inspectors. Further information can be obtained by visiting new website www.ukhomeinspectors.com Home Inspectors will be able to carry out Rdsap ratings on domestic properties and therefore compliment the work of energy surveyors. UK Home Inspectors Ltd have been working with pack providers, estate agents and solicitors for some considerable time and are pleased to offer the opportunity for licensee Home inspectors working under its brand the benefit of carrying out Home Condition Reports and Energy Surveys. Log on now to register your interest and see how you can benefit from UK Home Inspectors Limited.