

it will be
important for
developers
and Building
Control
inspectors to
forge strong
working
relationships

The Future of Building Control

It has been a busy time for Building Control over the last few months with a number of Approved documents under consultation and other consultations closing. There has also been the publication of the 'Future of Building Control: Implementation Plan' identifying several key issues and mapping the plans for progressing them.

'The Future of Building Control: Implementation Plan' was published on 1st September 2009 and was produced from an original review of Building Control in 2007/08. The purpose of the review was to improve the Building Control system and compliance with the Building Regulations. Although the economic circumstances may have altered from the original review the demands over the coming decades - climate and demographic change and demands for housing - are all leading to a fundamental shift in expectations placed on Building Control services.

With this in mind, it will be important for developers and Building Control inspectors to forge strong working relationships to allow for a smooth crossover in working practices. Our Building Control division, PG Surveyors, who are going from strength to strength, pride ourselves on offering guidance and support to all of our clients whilst providing a streamlined and cost effective Building Control solution.

'The Implementation Plan' formulated by the Department for Communities and Local Government in conjunction with other key stakeholders reinforces the vision of how to meet the challenge of delivering better homes and buildings. The highlights of the plan include:

- A periodic review programme for future updates and changes to Building Regulations giving everyone more clarity about which requirements will change and when
- Review cycles to be every 3 years with no approved document changed in consecutive periods, except for L and F, due to the drive towards zero carbon homes
- Publication of project guides to assist compliance on certain small domestic projects such as loft conversions
- Greater flexibility for Local Authority's to set their fees
- Risk assessed approach to inspections
- Limitations placed on the type of work Building Notices can be used for particularly new housing
- New enforcement powers for Local Authorities
- Extension of the Competent Persons schemes
- Improved complaints and performance management systems for all Building Control bodies



More details regarding the implementation plan including proposed dates can be found on the Communities and Local Government (CLG) website – www.communities.gov.uk.

The revised Approved Document G covering sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency which was due to come into force on 1st October 2009 has been postponed and will now come into force on 6th April 2010. This is due to a “detailed opinion” received from the European Commission with a number of comments on the draft document. This creates a 3 month standstill which prohibits the introduction of the Approved Document.

The government has now commenced the consultation process for amending Approved Document J. The key measures to be considered relate to air supply for combustion in airtight homes, better guidance on bio-fuel technology, mandatory installation of Carbon Monoxide alarms for use with solid fuel appliances, concealed flues, plumbing from condensing boilers and bunding of domestic oil tanks. The consultation closes on 26th November 2009 and we will update you with the results of that and any significant issues in future newsletters.

The consultation for proposed changes to Part L and F has now closed and the implementation date is still proposed for 2010 although no specific date has yet been confirmed. Just as a reminder the Approved Documents are part of the governments drive that new homes will be net zero carbon from 2016. As steps to achieving this target, energy efficiency standards for new homes are to be improved by 25% in 2010 and 44% in 2013 relative to current 2006 standards.

Premier Guarantee and our Building Control company PG Surveyors support the vision of a Building Control system that is more consistent and accountable and that accords with the consultancy approach that we employ.

From design stage to completion, your assigned surveyor will be dedicated to providing you with a service that will not only help you to comply with Building Regulations, but also save you time and money through the advice and guidance provided. We can tailor our inspections to your development ensuring that we’re there when you need us to be and for larger projects, we can provide a bespoke project team. Add onto this some of the most competitive rates on the market, we believe this is an offer you’ll find hard to beat.

For further information on this or any other issues, you can contact our Building Control team on 0844 873 3663.



Nigel Edson

Principal Building Control Surveyor, PG Surveyors