

16 December 2011

Our Ref:
Your Ref:

MAKING ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE DATA PUBLICLY AVAILABLE

The Department for Communities & Local Government will be making Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) data publicly available next year. For most people, it will be available in pdf format from a publicly accessible website. However, alternative arrangements will be put in place for organisations with a legitimate need to access the data in bulk. This letter seeks your views on how best and in what format to make this information available to such organisations, while ensuring that we comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

In this letter, the term “EPC data” refers to the data contained in Energy Performance Certificates, Display Energy Certificates (DECs) and Air Conditioning Inspection Reports (ACIRs).

When an EPC or DEC is produced, a copy must be lodged on a national Register. There are currently over 7 million EPCs and DECs on the Register. A similar requirement will apply in respect of ACIRs from April next year. At present, access to the Register is very tightly controlled. However, using powers in the Energy Act 2011, the Government intends to open up access to the Register from 6 April 2012. The data is being made publicly available for the following reasons:

- to improve transparency;
- it is a valuable and practical source of information to the general public about the energy efficiency of domestic and non-domestic buildings.
- having access to Energy Performance Certificate data could increase awareness among the general public of the energy efficiency of homes and commercial buildings.
- it would also enable individuals or organisations to check and compare the energy efficiency of individual buildings.
- it may encourage individuals to make improvements to their home or business, leading to reduced fuel costs and carbon emissions and improved thermal comfort.
- on a larger scale, it could promote greater energy efficiency and thereby benefit the environment, public health and energy security.

As a minimum, the following information will be made available:

- address of property;
- actual and potential energy rating(s);
- recommendations for improvements;
- details of assessor/inspector;
- in future, whether there is a Green Deal attached to the property.

However, we are keen to ensure that we make additional data available to bulk users where that would be useful and to ensure that we make it available in the most useful format.

Therefore, your views are sought on which additional data items should be made available. A list of the data items that could potentially be provided is attached at **Annex A**. Your views are also sought on the best way of making this data available. Given the potential size of the data files, it may not be appropriate to seek to, for example, email them to bulk users. One option could, therefore, be to permit such users to directly access the Register.

As far as possible, we believe the data should be provided in as 'uncut' a format as possible, allowing users to cut and analyse the data in a way that is most convenient to them. Once the format in which the data will be provided has been decided, it will not be possible to provide it in other ways, i.e. a data output that is tailored to the requirements of a particular organisation will not be available.

Bulk users will be subject to a Code of Conduct designed to ensure that the data is stored and processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. In considering whether an organisation should be permitted bulk access, we will take a range of factors into account including whether such access would:

- facilitate research and analysis, including opportunities to monitor reduced carbon emissions from buildings;
- increase public awareness of the impact that buildings have on levels of CO₂ emissions which could in turn lead to action by building owners and occupiers to reduce emissions from their building;
- enabling businesses and others involved in the Green Deal to market offers to building occupiers that already have an EPC and may therefore have an interest in making energy efficiency improvements to their building; and
- give organisations that market or promote energy efficiency measures a better understanding of the potential market.

I would welcome your views on what data should be made available as well as how it should be provided as soon as possible and in any event by no later than 31 January 2012.

Yours sincerely,

Micheal Wilson

Potential EPC Data items to be made available to the public

- **Region**
- **Status e.g.** - Rental, Private, etc.;
- **Property e.g.** - House, Flat, maisonette etc.;
- **Property description** - detached; semi-detached; mid-terrace etc.;
- **Age bands** - before 1900 and in stratified age bands to date;
- **Number of Rooms** - Number of habitable rooms, Number of heated habitable rooms;
- **Property/Room Dimensions**
- **Conservatory Data** - Separated/Not separated - heaters fixed, not fixed, Floor area, Double glazed;
- **Floor construction** - solid, suspended timber, suspended, not timber;
- **Floor insulation**
- **Wall construction**
- **Wall insulation**
- **Type of Roof** - e.g. pitched roof (slates or tiles), flat roof, pitched roof (thatch)
- **Roof insulation** (if not another dwelling above)
- **Roof insulation** (loft space) **thickness**
- **Rafter insulation thickness**
- **Flat roof insulation thickness**
- **Roof room insulation**
- **Windows** - secondary or multiple glazing
- **Fireplaces**
- **Main heating system**
- **Second main heating system (where applicable)**
- **Community heating system**
- **Main heating controls**
- **Water heating**
- **Space cooling system**
- **Mechanical ventilation**
- **Solar water heating**
- **Photovoltaic array**
- **Terrain e.g.** - dense urban, - low rise urban or suburban, rural
- **Wind turbine**
- **Lighting e.g. fixed lighting outlets, and low-energy fixed lighting outlets**