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(including the Ministry of Justice)

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Who requires BREEAM Building Assessments?



Who requires BREEAM building assessments?

Willmott Dixon Construction has a target to deliver all buildings to BREEAM standards in the Ten Point Sustainable Project Criteria. BREEAM building assessments are required by various regulatory and government organisations as follows.

Office of Government Commerce (OGC) (including the Ministry of Justice and National Offender Management Service)

OGC requires a BREEAM rating of 'EXCELLENT' for all new buildings from March 2003. This has not been widely and consistently enforced by Government and the OGC. In other sectors enforcement has been more rigorous as explained in the following paragraphs.

Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)

It is a condition of capital funding that new build and refurbishment projects achieve a minimum 'VERY GOOD' rating under BREEAM Schools/Education. The requirement covers:

- All major new-build projects valued at over £500,000 (primary schools) and £2million (secondary schools);
- All refurbishment projects valued at over £500,000 (primary schools) and £2million (secondary schools) and affecting more than 10% of the floor area of the school;
- Smaller schemes may be suitable for formal BREEAM assessment. Designers should, as far as practicable, apply the same standards to all projects;
- Some individual education projects have higher rating requirements on a project by project basis for example Building Schools for the Future, Academy Program and Primary School Program.

Further/Higher Education Sector

The Learning & Skills Council (LSC) has set a standard for all major new Further Education/College projects to achieve a standard of BREEAM 'EXCELLENT'. In the Higher Education sector the picture is more mixed with projects in Wales receiving WAG funding requiring 'Excellent', but other universities tending to set their own individual standards for projects. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has recently issued proposals for linking HE funding to sustainability improvements in the new and existing building stock - it's reasonable to expect therefore that the majority of new HE construction projects will require BREEAM 'Excellent' to be achieved.



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Regional Development Agencies

BRE is working with RDA's to develop regional versions of the Sustainability Checklist for developments. This is co-funded by the ODPM and WWF. This is now available as BREEAM Communities. Launched in June 2009, BREEAM Communities has been aligned with the English planning system. By providing third party certification of planning documentation, developers are able to demonstrate the sustainability potential of their site and local planning authorities can be confident that the necessary sustainability targets have been met or exceeded.

Local Authorities

Local Authorities are incorporating environmental standards as part of supplementary and planning guidance, and are mandating BREEAM including within Section 106 agreements.

Department of Health

As of 1st of July 2008, all health authorities in the UK (Department of Health, Welsh Health Estates, Health Facilities Scotland and the Department of Health Social Services and Public Safety) require that new healthcare buildings seeking Outline of Business Case (OBC) approval commit to achieving an 'EXCELLENT' rating, and all refurbishments commit to achieving a 'VERY GOOD' rating. For further details (including capital cost thresholds), please refer to the 'FAQ' document on the BREEAM Healthcare webpage.

Commercial Sector

BREEAM remains a voluntary standard in this sector, but there are a large number of developer-led projects in the commercial office market in the UK where BREEAM 'Excellent' has been achieved. This has been targeted purely to increase the market value and marketability of the new space. The first project to achieve BREEAM 'Outstanding' in the UK is a speculative industrial/warehouse space project in the Midlands.

Defence Sector

The Ministry of Defence has used its own proprietary assessment method known as DREAM (Defence-Related Environmental Assessment Methodology) to assess construction projects on military camps and bases. The method is similar to BREEAM in approach, but lacks the rigorous QA and validation process of BREEAM.

Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

The Homes and Communities Agency was formed on 1st December 2008 bringing English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation together referred to by the HCA as 'the single conversation'.



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In 2007, the Housing Corporation prescribed a minimum standard of Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 in their Design and Quality Standards. English Partnerships also set Code for Sustainable Homes Level 3 as the minimum standard for new build housing and a BREEAM 'VERY GOOD' rating for non domestic buildings in their quality standards.

Welsh Assembly Government

The Welsh Assembly Government requires a BREEAM Excellent rating or a minimum of Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH) Level 3 together with 10% recycled content as a core condition of funding, with the aspiration of zero carbon for all new buildings in Wales by 2011. There are some exceptions for smaller schemes, and the standard is not required for refurbishment, alterations and extensions, although these schemes still have to be designed to energy efficient standards. The planning system in Wales also now requires as mandatory a minimum of CSH Level 3 and a reduction of 31% in carbon emissions above 2006 Building Regulations for residential buildings, and BREEAM Very Good for buildings above 1000m².

Further Information

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