

To:

The Chief Executive

Unitary, Metropolitan, District and London Borough Councils in England
County and County Borough Councils in Wales

The Town Clerk, City of London

The Clerk, Council of the Isles of Scilly

The Sub-Treasurer, Inner Temple

The Under Treasurer, Middle Temple

The Head of Building Control

Unitary Metropolitan, District and London Borough Councils in England
County and County Borough Councils in Wales

City of London

Council of the Isles of Scilly

Approved Inspectors

cc: The Chief Executive:

County Councils in England

National Park Authorities in England & Wales

The Chief Fire Officer: Fire Authorities in England and Wales

1st September 2009

Dear Sir or Madam

FUTURE OF BUILDING CONTROL: IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

I am pleased to enclose the *Future of Building Control: Implementation Plan and Milestone Map*, which was published on 1 September. You can download electronic copies from our website at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/buildingcontrolimplementation>

From the milestone map you can see at a glance what changes are planned and when we expect to see them happen.

The original purpose of this review - to make the building control system work better - still resonates in this difficult economic climate. Although the economic circumstances may have altered, the demands over the coming decades - climate and demographic change and the demand for housing - are all leading to a fundamental shift in the expectations placed on the building control service.

We worked together with you and other key stakeholders, for some time to create this vision of how to meet the challenge of delivering better homes and buildings. I am pleased that the Building Control Alliance, representing all building control providers has signed up to this vision which articulates the kind of building control system we want to see. All individual building control bodies are encouraged to embrace this new vision which we hope will create a new culture of compliance, responsibility and understanding amongst building control and their customers, clients and stakeholders.

Together we have done a great deal since the review was launched.

- The informal consolidated versions of the Building Regulations and the Building (Approved Inspectors etc.) Regulations 2000 are now available at <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/england/professionals/en/1115314808708.html>
- In April we published a consultation on proposed changes to the Local Authority Building Control charging regime. The responses are currently being analysed and we expect to publish the final package of measures towards the end of the year.
- In May the independent Building Control Performance Standards Advisory Group (BCPSAG) published a report analysing the voluntary performance indicators for 2007/08.¹, the first year of operation. The analysis of the 2008/09 returns is underway and it is expected that this report will be published in October.
- The risk-assessment guidance for all Building Control Bodies is on track to be published in October. This guidance is being produced in close collaboration and consultation with building control bodies and we thank you for participating in the various workshops and completing the questionnaires
- The final version of the first project guide on loft conversions will be available in October, thanks to the work of industry, including LABC and the Association of Consultant Approved Inspectors

We have also begun a great deal of activity to pull together a detailed and integrated package of changes to the building control system - such as reform of the building notice system and approved inspector regulations etc - with the intention that they will be implemented quickly after the next consultation round in late 2010.

Robust performance management system

A key challenge will be strengthening the existing performance indicators and building a system to monitor and benchmark the results. We welcome the Building Control Alliance and BCPSAG's commitment to this task and look forward to having in place these systems which will demonstrate the positive and added value building control brings to building projects.

¹ www.bcpsag.wetpaint.com

The constituent members of BCPSAG are in the process of refining the Memorandum of Understanding under the terms of which the group operates. The aim is to ensure that the group has the right people and processes in place to ensure the continued operation of the Building Control Performance Standards and deliver the revised indicators and performance management system in line with the commitments made in the Implementation Plan.

Alongside this, Michael Finn, who had been the Chair since BCPSAG was formed, decided to stand down at the end of his current term; his valuable contribution over the last 10 years is much appreciated. The new chairman is Alan Crane, a construction industry professional with 40 years' experience on the client-side and a member of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC). Alan was responsible for developing performance management systems and performance indicators for the construction industry and so has a proven track record of delivering in this arena.

Periodic Review

The Implementation Plan includes the first periodic review milestone map, outlining how we plan to deliver future changes to the technical Parts of the Building Regulations and their supporting Approved Documents in three yearly cycles. This new approach will provide better signposting, planning and co-ordination and reduce the burden of future change.

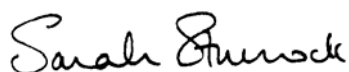
As part of the first periodic review we have been evaluating Building Regulations Part A (structure) and Part C (resistance to contaminants and moisture). We have identified a number of issues that Part A and C will need to reflect, in particular a recent Health Protection Agency consultation on radon protection in buildings and the latest UK Climate Change Projections. The full implications of these will not become clear until next year at the earliest and so will not be in time to inform changes in 2010. We have concluded, therefore, that we should continue our work looking at Parts A and C, and what changes might be appropriate for the next periodic review in 2013. We will provide further information to our stakeholders on these particular evaluations shortly.

I wish to thank you again for your comments and contributions to this review. Your comments and thoughts have helped shape this Plan. We intend to continue this close collaboration with you.

Please contact Paula Higgins (paula.higgins@communities.gsi.gov.uk) if you have any questions or enquiries regarding the Implementation Plan.

Additional copies are available from Joanna.irish@communities.gsi.gov.uk.

Yours faithfully



SARAH STURROCK