CONSULTATION RESPONSES

PEPA has responded to two recent consultations:

An MHCLG consultation on proposed amendments to the Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations 2012 in respect of Article 15 which relates to Air Condition Reports. A copy of the response can be found here.

A Call for Evidence from the Environmental Audit Select Committee on the Energy Efficiency of Existing Homes. A copy of the response can be found here.

MEES EXEMPTION GUIDELINES

PEPA has now issued MEES Exemption Guidelines for the benefit of landlords and energy assessors alike and these can be found here. We hope that you find these useful.

COMPLIANCE

As many of you will know, PEPA is now actively pursuing instances of non-compliance with the EPBD requirements in respect of EPCs, DECs and A/C Reports. If you are aware of any property that does not have a valid EPC, DEC or A/C Report as required by the regulations, please visit the PEPA website here and complete the on-line form.
2020 CONFERENCE

Following the very successful Conference in February, the PEPA Executive have been addressing all the many questions that were raised by delegates using the interactive Slido technology. This exercise is now complete and the responses to the questions can be found on the PEPA website [here](#); in some cases the responses have been obtained directly from Government. Every question and answer provides valuable input for how PEPA lobbies to enhance the use of energy information to improve energy efficiency of buildings and of course benefit our industries and energy assessors.

Andrej Miller from the department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS) on The future of ECO at the PEPA Conference 2020 (above left); Andrew Parkin, PEPA Chairman, welcomes delegates (below left); Question & Answer session with Schemes, using Slido technology (above right).

2021 CONFERENCE

The 2021 PEPA Conference has been scheduled for Tuesday 23rd February – Coronavirus permitting. A very strong line up of speakers is planned, including Lord Foster of Bath who will report on the progress of his Bill through Parliament (see page 5).

There will be speakers from MHCLG and BEIS and plenty of opportunity for delegates to interact with them by posing questions and making comments.

Please put the date in your diaries!
GREEN HOMES GRANT

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rishi Sunak, has announced a new £2 billion grant for homeowners and landlords undertaking energy-efficiency home improvements, such as cavity wall or floor insulation, and double-glazed windows.

The new Green Homes Grant is part of the Government’s initiative to cut emissions and is set to benefit homeowners by offering vouchers for home improvements. The vouchers will be offered to homeowners across England up to the value of £5,000, and up to £10,000 for the poorest households.

Launching in September 2020, the Green Homes Grant aims to pay towards home improvements that support energy-saving and efficiency, up to two-thirds of the total cost. Homeowners will be able to apply for the grant online, alongside recommendations for energy-efficiency improvements and local accredited suppliers.

Alok Sharma, Business Secretary, said the scheme will help lower energy bills and save hundreds of pounds for households every year. The scheme also aims to support the creation of new jobs across the industry following the economic downturn from coronavirus.

From September, around a half of the fund will be spent in one financial year, which will be spent supporting the poorest homeowners. It is estimated the scheme could save some homeowners £600 a year on energy bills, helping to support those struggling with rising energy bills.

The Green Grant Scheme is part of the Government’s £3 billion ‘Green Investment’ package which was announced by Rishi Sunak in the summer statement. The Green Investment package sets to boost the economy and create new jobs following the coronavirus outbreak, whilst helping the UK to achieve its ‘net-zero carbon emissions’ target by 2050.

The package will outline measures to help meet the UK’s net-zero target, by improving insulation and energy-efficiency of public buildings, and retro-fitting low-carbon technologies in low-income households, such as social housing.
STAMP DUTY HOLIDAY

Additionally, the Chancellor has also announced a temporary Stamp Duty holiday, to help boost the housing market. Specifically, the Government has increased the lower stamp duty threshold to £500,000 for property sales in England and Northern Ireland. That means any property purchases below the new level will not need to pay stamp duty, as long as the deal is completed before 31 March 2021.

The move is aimed at helping buyers who have taken a financial hit because of the coronavirus crisis, however, this may not help most first-time buyers, who already benefited from an increased threshold of £300,000.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak said:

"The average stamp duty bill will fall by £4,500. And nearly nine out of 10 people buying a main home this year, will pay no stamp duty at all."

PEPA CHAIRMAN ANDREW PARKIN COMMENTS:

“With regards to the Green Homes Grant, I welcome any new incentives and funding, but it has to be done correctly, using PAS standards (2030/2035) and strategically help a sustainable level of growth in the industry. I am hoping this is just the start of a package of funding and policies to improve the efficiency of our buildings.

PEPA also welcomes the cut in Stamp Duty, as this should increase interest and demand in the sale market and encourage buyers to make a move now, rather than waiting, and therefore increase demand for domestic EPCs. I am mindful that this could see some negative effects in April 2021, however, I hope to see further support for the market to stimulate activity beyond March of next year”.

Andrew Parkin, PEPA Chair
LORD FOSTER OF BATH’S BILL

As many of you will know, Lord Foster of Bath is sponsoring a Private Members Bill through Parliament which is titled ‘Domestic Premises (Energy Performance) Bill [HL] 2019’ (see here). The Bill requires, amongst other things, that the Secretary of State ensures that domestic properties have a minimum energy efficiency EPC rating of C – something which PEPA entirely supports. To help the progress of the Bill through Parliament, PEPA is asking Energy Assessors to play a part by engaging with their local MP, seeking their support for the Bill. A draft letter to your local MP can be found here and the contact details for your local MP here. If you do write it would be great if you can blind copy your letter to Ron Bailey who works with Lord Foster at ron.bailey@parliament.uk. The stronger the lobby the better the chances of this Bill becoming an Act of Parliament.

PEPA MANIFESTO

The PEPA Manifesto has been refreshed, see below,

We welcome all and any feedback on the Manifesto to shirley@pepassociation.org

In the next 5 years it is PEPA policy that:

• Consumers and businesses place importance on the value of energy information to improve energy efficiency, save money and carbon
• Every building in UK has a valid EPC, DEC and Air Conditioning Report where applicable*.
• EPCs have a validity of 3 years and DECs must be renewed annually.
• Energy Assessment is as important as certification and as such the National Calculation Methodologies (NCMs); SAP, RdsAP, SBEM and Operational Rating will be promoted to all stakeholders as the fundamental benchmarking tool for any energy efficiency strategy.
• EPCs, DECs or national methodologies are the measurement tools for accessing funds under all Government incentive and grant schemes (including any that are the responsibility of energy companies or other third parties to deliver).
• The energy rating of a property will have a direct impact on Government taxes such that energy efficient properties benefit from lower taxes
• The energy rating of a property will have a direct impact on Mortgage rates such that buying an energy efficient property or improving the energy efficiency of a property will make it cheaper to own
• Good energy efficiency ratings are a badge of social responsibility
• Energy assessment should continue to be developed to enhance the delivery of Government policy and energy efficiency schemes
• There should be ongoing improvement and development of energy assessors and the underlying methodologies for measuring energy efficiency

*EPCs and DECs measure different things and serve a different purpose for the building owner/prospective owner. In an ideal world a building would have both

Cont’d over
PEPA MANIFESTO (cont’d)

To achieve these policies PEPA will:

1. Ensure that EPCs and DECs are constantly improved to provide the best possible information to consumers and businesses
2. Ensure that there is a robust quality regime that tests the accuracy of EPCs and DECs regularly and in a statistically valid manner
3. Ensure that there is full compliance with the EPBD regulations through:
   - Identifying instances of non-compliance with the use of appropriate tools for both non-domestic properties and domestic properties
   - Working with an enforcement agency that is effective (such as National Trading Standards Board) to ensure that there is proactive and meaningful enforcement
   - Establishing a process for identifying those properties that should have an EPC, DEC or Air Conditioning Report and thereafter an effective enforcement methodology
4. Lobby Government to demonstrate the extent to which it values energy efficiency by adopting a ‘carrot and stick’ approach for businesses and consumers. The carrot should be direct and delivered through lower household taxes and/or lower stamp duty on property transfer. The stick can be delivered enforcing the minimum energy efficiency rating regulations in the private rented sector and then raising the threshold to achieve a minimum of ‘EPC rating of C by 2035’
5. Draw up a plan for the effective promotion of energy efficiency information aimed at:
   - Government and third sector organisations (such as FoE and WWF) in order that they can play a full part in promoting EPCs and DECs
   - Businesses centred on the opportunity to save costs and ultimately improve the value of their properties
   - Consumers based on the opportunity to save money through lower household energy bills and pay lower taxes (subject to 4 above)
6. Introduce ‘in-home’ energy advice delivered by suitably trained energy assessors to assist property owners improve the energy efficiency of their properties and reduce costs and carbon emissions
7. Develop a regime for the promotion and use of the NCMs in a wider context than certification. This would include new uses and tools within different sectors.

COVID-19

Finally, we would like to draw your attention to the PEPA COVID-19 Resource Kit on the PEPA website, which we hope has been useful to the Energy Assessor community (here).

If you have any feedback, questions or comments for PEPA please e-mail shirley@pepassociation.org