



EPCs and what they mean to you

As of December 2007 every home on the market must have a Home Information Pack. An Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) forms part of this pack.

What is an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)?

An EPC provides a rating for the energy efficiency of a building. The ratings are set against standard criteria to enable one building to be compared with another of a similar type. EPCs are similar to the certificates now provided with domestic appliances such as refrigerators and washing machines. They give information on the energy performance as well as the environmental impact through carbon emissions. This information is rated on a scale of A to G, where A is the best and should have the lowest fuel bill. The average UK property is in bands D to E.

Each certificate also has a recommendation report, providing information about ways to improve the energy efficiency of the property. The rating that could be achieved if all the recommendations were to be implemented is also given. New homes will have a reduced recommendation report which will contain more advanced energy savings improvements such as solar panels. This is because it is expected that improvements to the thermal elements (walls, floor and roof) will be incorporated in the design.

By law, EPCs can only be produced by an Accredited Energy Assessor. EPCs must be registered and stored in a national register at www.EPCregister.com (for dwellings) and ndepregister.com (for non-dwellings) with a unique reference number. This can only be done by an On Construction Energy Assessor in conjunction with the relevant accreditation scheme.

What you have to do

When constructing a new dwelling there is a requirement to provide energy calculations to show compliance with Building Regulations. These calculations provide an energy rating using a Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP). They are intended to show that the dwelling will meet a minimum target for energy performance.

Dwellings offered for sale before completion must be assessed and information about the energy efficiency must be provided in a Predicted Energy Assessment (PEA). This PEA must be included in the Home Information Pack.

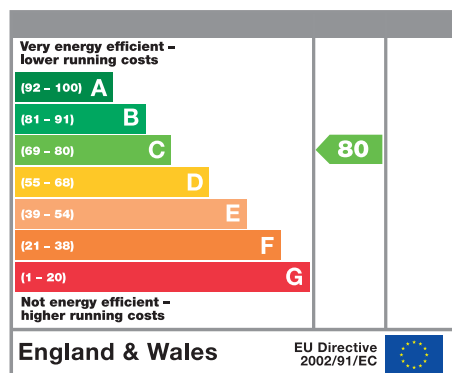
Prior to completion, the building will be required to satisfy an air permeability test, the results of which together with any changes in the building specification, will have an effect on the initial energy calculations.

On completion building control requires 'as built' energy calculations (SAP 2005 calculation). Building control must also be notified that a valid Energy Performance Certificate has been given to the owner of the building.

If you are selling a house, there are many ways you can obtain a Home Information Pack. These include using an estate agent, a specialist pack provider, or compiling it yourself.

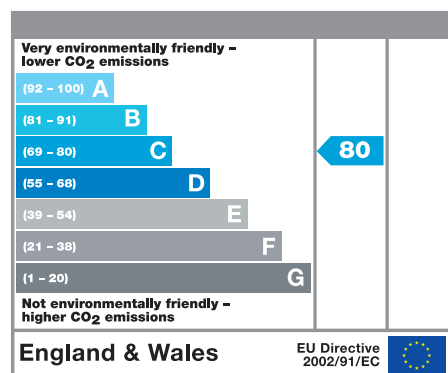
If you are buying a house you should ask to see the Home Information Pack on any properties you are interested in as the seller must have commissioned the pack by the time the property is on the market. You should be able to obtain a copy from the seller or the estate agent.

Energy Efficiency Rating



The energy efficiency rating is a measure of the overall efficiency of a home. The higher the rating the more energy efficient the home is and the lower the fuel bills are likely to be.

Environmental Impact (CO₂) Rating



The environmental impact rating is a measure of a home's impact on the environment in terms of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. The higher the rating the less impact it has on the environment.



To find out more about Home Information Packs go to www.homeinformationpacks.gov.uk

To find out more about building control's role, go to the LABC website at www.labc.uk.com and use the 'Find Your Local Authority' facility to contact your local authority building control department.