

LABC Cymru leads the way in enforcement of Part L

Enforcement of Part L of the Building Regulations (15.70%) is running a close third behind those for Fire (Part B) 16.39% and for Structure (Part A) 17.64%, recent research from LABC Cymru shows

The survey results answer critics who claim that local authorities are not enforcing Building Regulation Part L relating to energy conservation. The results follow closely the pattern of a similar research project in Cornwall in March.

LABC Cymru undertook this survey against a background of misunderstanding of enforcement. Many people think that building control surveyors only enforce particular Building Regulations when seeking a prosecution. However, the reality is that a more collaborative approach is used with guidance given on problems spotted at an

early stage. This pre-contravention intervention saves both time and money for all parties while still ensuring compliance.

The survey undertaken by LABC Cymru tracked surveyors in 10 local authorities (almost half of the total in Wales – 22) in spring this year.

Paul Everall, Chief Executive of LABC, welcoming the survey results said: "This demonstrates how working with the building industry provides not only more energy efficient and sustainable buildings, but also achieves better value. The emphasis on feedback during the design and build means that both time and money are saved

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because corrections can be made at an earlier stage. From everyone's point of view prevention is better than cure."

"Measuring enforcement by the number of prosecutions against non-compliant buildings does not give a true reflection of the emphasis that LABC Cymru has placed on sustainability issues in their work.

"The figures show how often building control surveyors make pre-contravention interventions (PCIs), and by explaining and guiding builders and contractors we get the right results and keep them engaged with us."

For more details about the survey, visit www.labc.uk.com.

Part G – don't waste a precious resource

The revised Part G of the Building Regulations comes into force on October 1 2009. Part G is one of the smaller parts of the Building Regulations covering Hygiene, Hot Water Safety and Water Efficiency. It is here that we find the Building Regulations that require homes to have suitable water supplies and washing/toilet facilities.

Many of the previous requirements of Part G have been retained and updated to keep pace with changes in the systems that we are putting into modern buildings, for example the new document contains updated guidance on the safe installation of hot water systems, gives some basic guidance on solar hot water systems and introduces a new requirement to limit the temperature of hot water from bath taps to 48°C to reduce the risk of scalding.

The new document also extends into new areas. In line with the Government's agenda to deliver more

sustainable buildings, guidance is now given about the efficient use of water in new dwellings. Guidance is given as to where potable (drinking) water needs to be supplied and where grey water or harvested rainwater can be used to reduce the demands on our mains water system. As well as this designers and builders of new homes will have to show that their houses have been designed so that potable water use will not exceed 125 litres per person per day.

The calculation method from the Code for Sustainable Homes will be used to demonstrate this reinforcing the Government's message that the Code will show the direction of future Building Regulations, although the current Part G limit of 125 litres per person per day falls short of the standards required to reach even level 1 of the Code for Sustainable Homes.

It is hoped that the introduction of the new Part G will improve hygiene and

hot water safety standards as well as starting on the journey of reducing water use which will be crucial if we are to move towards more sustainable housing.

Further information about Part G can be found on page 36. Meanwhile, the new Approved Document G is available as a free download from the Planning Portal – www.planningportal.gov.uk

