



Lord Marland of Odstock  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State



Andrew Stunell MP  
Parliamentary Under Secretary of State

8 December 2010

Dear Sir/Madam,

### **Seeking your views on how to improve the energy performance of buildings regime**

As you may know, we recently announced the launch of the 'Green Deal', which will be our flagship programme for improving the energy efficiency of homes and businesses from 2012. In preparation for this, the timing seems right to look at the operation of the energy performance of buildings regime which is currently in place in England and Wales. The existing regime was not designed with the Green Deal in mind, so it requires a thorough examination. We need to examine how well it is working and the extent to which it will be capable of supporting future policy implementation. We are therefore calling for expert input to support work already underway in this area, led by officials in our respective departments.

There have already been some notable achievements in this area, such as the implementation of the European Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD). However, we are aware of a number of concerns expressed by those who have experience of Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs), Display Energy Certificates (DECs) and air conditioning inspection reports. In particular, we are aware of concerns over the quality and consistency of EPCs and DECs; the levels of compliance and enforcement of the requirements; and the poor take-up of their recommendations by consumers. We also wish to seek views on how a roll-out of DECs to commercial premises could best be achieved.

We believe that there are vital synergies between our implementation of the EPBD and what we are hoping to achieve through broader policy on the energy efficiency of buildings, including the Green Deal. Also, where improvements can be made to the EPBD regime in England and Wales sooner than 2012, we are keen to push ahead. Our aim is to devise a set of recommendations to be implemented from early 2011. We believe this work would benefit greatly from your insight and experience and are seeking your evidence as a contribution to this.

In particular, we are seeking your feedback on how we might improve the framework in the following areas:

- a) The content, format, accessibility and coverage of EPCs and DECs, and the extent to which consumers act on their recommendations.

- b) How effectively EPC and DEC assessments are conducted, both in terms of the practical process/methodology used by assessors while on site, and the underpinning calculation methodologies/software they employ.
- c) The adequacy of the existing qualification and accreditation arrangements for energy assessors, and whether the current numbers of assessors matches the likely future demand for EPCs and DEC.
- d) How effective the quality control and assurance arrangements are in ensuring the production of high quality EPCs and DEC consistently across the country and, in particular, the performance of the accreditation schemes and auditing processes.
- e) How effective the current provisions are for ensuring compliance (and for enforcing against non-compliance) with EPC, DEC and air conditioning inspection report requirements.
- f) What scope there might be for making better use of EPC/DEC data to support the initiatives of public and private organisations to reduce carbon emissions from buildings.

We want to ensure that we carefully consider all aspects of the EPBD regime before recommending improvements. We will also need to set out clearly the implications of any additional actions on the current legal framework, ensuring that any proposed new rules are both effective and proportionate. However, as we have emphasised above, in order to implement improvements at the pace needed to make real progress on the energy performance of buildings, we need to report early in the New Year.

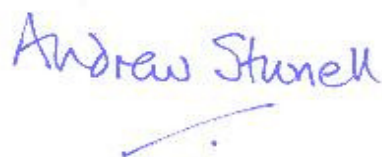
**We are therefore requesting that, if you have views to contribute to the examination of any of the above areas, you submit them by Tuesday 21 December to [green.deal@decc.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:green.deal@decc.gsi.gov.uk), quoting 'Energy performance of buildings evidence and feedback' in the subject line. Any questions you may have should also be directed to that address, with the same subject heading.**

We look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,



**LORD MARLAND OF ODSTOCK**



**ANDREW STUNELL MP**