



ZERO CARBON HUB - PROGRESS REPORT

2016 Taskforce – 6 June 2011

1. Purpose

This progress report covers the period from 16 March 2011 to present.

2. General

The *Plan for Growth* document launched on Budget day confirmed that the Zero Carbon Hub Task Group work on Carbon Compliance will form the basis for consultations on future changes to the Building Regulations up to and including those in 2016. The zero carbon new homes target has been changed and now includes only the emissions covered by Building Regulations (heating, fixed lighting, hot water and building services). Therefore, emissions from cooking and 'plug-in' appliances will not be addressed as part of this policy.

Over the previous period, the Hub has worked hard to disseminate news and explain the zero carbon definition to as many groups as possible. Also, we were grateful for the opportunity for a delegation from the Task Group to present findings and recommendations of the Carbon Compliance report to Andrew Stunell OBE MP on 23 May.

Work has been continuing on the development of a framework for Allowable Solutions and the draft report will be presented at the Taskforce meeting.

Other notable areas of work for the Hub have included:

- Leading a DCLG work group to develop the 'Standards and Calculation Methods' for Part L 2013 (new and existing homes). We are very grateful to John Tebbit for agreeing to chair this group.
- Rowner Renewal Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard Project – this £250k project, reported at the previous Taskforce meeting, is now well underway.
- Meetings with interested partners regarding reinstating our work on consumer engagement. Now that we have more clarity on zero carbon definition and costs, it is a good time to develop proposals for communicating the benefits of new homes to consumers. Crest Nicholson has agreed to second Helen Saunders (Group Marketing) on a part-time basis to help lead this work.
- Development of a UK Study Tour to be held on 15 and 16 June 2011.

3. Corporate and People

The Board of Zero Carbon Hub Ltd has met once since the previous report and the next meeting is on 9 June 2011. At the April meeting, Rob Pannell, the Hub's Head of House Building since 2008, was appointed as a Director. Other Board Members are the Chairman, Paul King (UK-GBC), Imtiaz Farookhi (NHBC), Mike Freshney (HBF and Robust Details Ltd), Bob Ledsome (CLG), Ray Morgan (LGA), Stephen Muers (HCA), and John Tebbit (CPA). Neil Jefferson and David Adams are seconded to the Hub as Chief Executive and Executive Director respectively.

The Hub 'core' team comprises: Neil Jefferson, David Adams, Rob Pannell, Sarah Downes, Clive Turner, Robert Macdonald, Alex Uregian, Madeline Logan and Jayde Lucas. Marco Marijewycz has been seconded to the Hub from E.ON on a part-time basis, an arrangement which ended officially on 31 May.

The only consultants retained by the Zero Carbon Hub on an ongoing basis are Tessa Parnell (Fulcrum Mott Macdonald), Ross Holleron (BRE) and Sayru Vatel (Richards Partington Architects).

4. Business Plan, Finance and Funding

Preliminary accounts for the 2010/11 financial year are in line with forecasted figures.

We have secured additional funding of £200k from NHBC for the current financial year which helps plug some of the gap arising from the ending of CLG grant funding and enables us to deliver our Business Plan objectives for 2011/12:

- **2016 Timeline** – Monitor and report progress against the overall programme plan to the 2016 Taskforce.
- **Industry and stakeholder engagement** – Improve the awareness and knowledge of planners, architects, construction products companies, housebuilders (management level) and Building Control. This will include CPD events, conferences, workshops, case studies, web-site content.
- **Energy Efficiency and Carbon Compliance** – Communicate the scope and requirements of the Fabric Energy Efficiency and Carbon Compliance Standards and follow up relevant recommendations from Task Group, including work on ventilation and indoor air quality, overheating, site aggregation for Carbon Compliance, etc. and to enable these to be incorporated in DCLG's future work programme on building regulations. A particular focus for the year will be 'Closing the performance gap' with work being undertaken on build testing and occupancy monitoring.
- **Allowable Solutions** – Facilitate practical implementation of 'Allowable Solutions'. Support DCLG as it develops proposals.
- **Consumer/Marketing** – Help create the consumer proposition. Create plans to implement recommendations made in *Marketing Tomorrow's New Homes* including web-site and work on innovative funding solutions.
- **Skills and Training** – Lead in identifying skills and knowledge needed to deliver low and zero carbon homes. Help build capacity and skills. Collaborate with others to implement the recommendations in *Home Building Skills 2020*, including provision of a skills portal.

5. Media activity and opinion

Press enquiries for information continue to be dealt with on a variety of subjects, including the Budget announcements and latest construction costs for a zero carbon house, with material referenced in articles.

Website statistics for April and May indicate a slight reduction in overall viewing figures when compared to the period of February and March which followed the high level of press and political activity around the Zero Carbon Hub conference and March Budget announcements. When compared to the same period in 2010, figures indicate an increase of over 15% in total site viewing figures and also an increase in the time visitors spent viewing content on the site. Incidences of some key search terms, which direct traffic to the site, has increased. This includes the term 'Allowable Solutions'.

6. NHBC Foundation and Zero Carbon Hub

Since the previous report, NHBC Foundation has launched a number of publications developed in conjunction with the Zero Carbon Hub:

- *Part L – where to start: An introduction for house builders and designers*. This guide was heavily supported by the Hub and is intended to help house builders and designers understand what the 2010 changes to Approved Document L1A mean. The guide gives examples of four typical homes, outlining and providing technical specifications for approaches which could satisfy the requirements.
- *Introduction to Feed-in Tariffs* is due to take place. This guide, aimed at house builders and RSLs, provides an overview of the Feed-in Tariff scheme and worked examples for PV, wind and MicroCHP installations.
- *Energy Performance of Buildings Directive – Introductory guide to the recast EPBD-2*. The guide provides a comparison of UK low and zero carbon housing policy and the European requirements.

A substantial NHBC Foundation research project supported by the Zero Carbon Hub is the re-investigation of *Zero Carbon: what does it mean to homeowners [and occupiers]*. This project is at the initial stages and will investigate three years after an initial study, the consumer understanding of the zero carbon homes policy and experiences of living in new energy efficient homes.

Also at various stages of development are:

- Microgeneration technologies in new build housing: technological trajectories and user experiences.
- Exploring the Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard – implications of the Standard.
- Zero Carbon Compendium II.
- Review of overheating in highly insulated homes in the UK.

Neil Jefferson
1 June 2011