

Blake Laphorn Tarlo Lyons'

social housing news



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are you prepared for...

Energy Performance Certificates?

Andrew Wiseman, Blake Laphorn Tarlo Lyons new environmental partner, takes a look at the implications of energy performance certificates for registered social landlords.

Recently there has been much publicity over the introduction of both Home Information Packs and Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs). Most of the interest has focussed around what happens when a property is sold. What has been overlooked by many Registered Social Landlords (RSL) is that from 1 October 2008 an EPC will be required to be provided by them to a tenant when a property is rented. Failure to provide an EPC could result in a fixed penalty of £200 per property being imposed by local trading standards officers.

An EPC sets out the energy rating of a property, similar to the A to G rating found on many domestic appliances. In addition the EPC has to contain advice on what energy performance measures could be used to increase the energy efficiency of the property. A new EPC will need to be prepared for a property at least every ten years.

While further guidance is expected on the exact nature of the EPC the RSL will be expected to provide to a tenant, RSLs do need to start to plan how they are going manage this process. Some RSLs are intending to incorporate the EPC into their stock condition surveys and there have been some discussions between the social housing sector and the Government about how to make the system more workable. One suggestion is that one EPC could be produced for each type of property as against one for every single property.

At this stage the draft guidance has not been finalised so work cannot commence on the production of the EPCs although both financial and stock management issues need to be considered at an early stage.

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