

# RSAW



Cymdeithas Frenhinol Penseiri yng Nghymru  
Royal Society of Architects in Wales

## **RSAW Chartered Members survey The Welsh Building Regulations**

**March 2010**

The Building Regulations are in the process of being devolved in Wales to the Welsh Assembly Government. The timescales are that the powers will be devolved by the end of 2011. Therefore, any proposed Welsh Building Regulations would not come into force until 2012.

It is anticipated that the focus will be on how the Regulations can be used to drive down energy consumptions within new buildings and thereby reducing the carbon footprint for Wales.

The RSAW, in association with the Wales Low/Zero Carbon Hub, would like to understand how our members feel the Welsh Building Regulations should be handled. Should they follow the same methodology as the English Regulations or should they more radically deviate? Is there an advantage from having a simpler set of regulations albeit with more onerous technical performance standards?

We would like to know your thoughts on the matter. They will be aggregated and the responses will be made anonymous. They will then be shared with the Wales Low/Zero Carbon Hub and other professional bodies (such as CEW, RICS, ICE, etc) who are likely to be doing a similar survey of their members.

The collation of these responses will then form part of the dialogue with the Welsh Assembly Government. It is genuinely an opportunity to engage, to be heard, and to shape the future of our industry in Wales.

As a bit of assurance that the response will be heard the Wales Low/Zero Carbon Hub held a workshop with the House Builders Federation in November 2009. This was attended by Jane Davidson, AM, Minister for the Environment, Planning and Housing along with other representatives from the Welsh Assembly Government. The workshop identified what the house builders felt could be achieved and where the standards in the Code for Sustainable Homes become increasingly difficult from both a technical and procurement perspective. This output has been received by the Assembly who are now looking at how a pragmatic way forward can be established that ultimately achieves the objectives and makes the steps required for the industry easier to take.

We would like to thank you in advance for your participation in this survey.

**Pierre Wassenaar  
President, RSAW**

**Cymdeithas Frenhinol  
Penseiri yng Nghymru**

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The Royal Society of Architects in Wales  
is the Wales region of the  
Royal Institute of British Architects



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## Your details:

Name:	
Position:	
Company:	
Email:	
Telephone:	
<i>(please provide a number you are happy for us to call you on if required).</i>	

## The survey:

1. Given that the Welsh Assembly Government will have the powers to create the Welsh Building Regulations what route do you feel should be adopted in relation to energy aspects of the regulations? Please comment on the following or provide your own suggestion.

	<i>Fill in your response below</i>
English Regulations but with higher standards.	
PassivHaus.	
A completely new standard.	
Other (please specify).	



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2. Is there an advantage to Wales moving ahead of England in terms of timing? Will we have gained greater knowledge and, therefore, practices in Wales will generally be ahead of the game? Or will we be struggling with compliance because the supply chain required is not in place?

*Fill in your response below*



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3. Do you think the creation of the Welsh Building Regulations could, or should, encourage a Wales based supply chain thereby reducing reliance on imports, or should we recognise the global market and seek the best products from across Europe and adapt the regulations to what that market can economically provide?

*Fill in your response below*



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4. Given that the regulations will get updated from time to time, how often do you feel these updates should occur and how much prior notice should there be before the revised version comes into effect?

Frequency of change ( <i>advise your preferred against one of the following</i> ):	
About 12 months intervals	
About 18 months intervals	
About 24 months intervals	
About 36 months intervals	
<i>Other (please specify):</i>	

Publication period before coming into effect ( <i>advise your preferred against one of the following</i> ):	
About 6 months intervals	
About 9 months intervals	
About 12 months intervals	
About 18 months intervals	
<i>Other (please specify):</i>	

<i>Other comments</i>



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5. Would you consider it beneficial to scrap obligatory BREEAM ratings and have all environmental aspects of design covered by the Welsh Building Regulations?

*Fill in your response below*



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6. It is likely that some or all of the energy required to achieve 'zero carbon' buildings will be generated away from the site. Should Welsh Building Regulations cover 'off site' energy generation as part of the technical approval process, or should an alternative mechanism be set up to approve and monitor this?

*Fill in your response below*

7. The requirements and information provided at planning stage has increased recently to promote low carbon buildings. When they occur, should Welsh Building Regulations take over some of the requirements currently being made at planning stage, or is it necessary to demonstrate the proposed scheme's design and energy performance at the planning stage?

*Fill in your response below*



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8. What other considerations do you think should be considered that would be beneficial to the devolved regulations?

*Fill in your response below*

9. The Welsh Assembly are in the process of acquiring the power to require sprinklers in all new domestic buildings, which may be implemented through Welsh Building Regulations. Is the requirement of sprinklers a good thing, aiding design flexibility, or a bad thing, increasing insurance and build costs?

*Fill in your response below*

Thanks again. Please return your completed survey form by **30 April 2010**, by email to [rsaw@inst.riba.org](mailto:rsaw@inst.riba.org)



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