

---

---

---

**Subject:** RE: basements working group - Abba Energy's comments  
**Date:** 15 February 2013 11:43:21

---

Good morning Penelope

Yesterday's meeting was clearly useful, but the essential value of the use of BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment (BDR) and other environmental assessment methods was not discussed and I am away next week so cannot be at the planned meeting.

I will briefly raise a few points that I think are critical:

- Resident complaints appear to frequently include 'dust' – this is not addressed under BDR (it was an option under EcoHomes). But Best Practice guidelines exist, are mostly common sense and not hard to 'police'. RBKC could include these in scheme requirements;
- To address complaints that there are numerous issues which can be 'altered after completion and occupation':
  - Focus on the issues which are hardest to alter once the building is finished, perhaps by making them mandatory or using a requirement for minimum percentages;
- To address complaints that BDR (etc) is 'too easy':
  - Try to get the end-user to 'buy-in' – some of my Clients have no clue what is meant by 'Low Energy' or 'water efficiency fixtures and fittings'. What happens where the Clients pay no attention whatsoever to the EcoHomes Compliance Specifications and instead simply buy and installed whatever water goods they want? The Post Construction EcoHomes report could be issued because it would fail the 40% Water rule of planning, but then if the planners don't ask for the final Certificate then the Client won't be bothered about it. On a sizeable scheme the EcoHomes assessor will often not come into contact with the Client, so then how do the planning requirements filter through to the Client? And what happens if the Client simply ignores all guidance?
  - Focus on actual compliance – I inspect finished properties to check compliance before writing the Post Construction Report, which is then passed to the BRE for Certification. But assessors work for developers and I know of no development where the BRE has inspected finished properties to check compliance. The BRE is the ultimate arbiter of BDR and if (as I understand things) RBKC has limited capabilities to inspect at Practical Completion, then who is policing things? Someone independent with teeth should be doing this...

Just some of my thoughts, which I hope we can discuss another time soon.

Kind regards - Julian

Julian Williams BA(Hons) DipARCH

Licensed and Registered Assessor for BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment, EcoHomes and Code for Sustainable Homes

Director, **Abba Energy Ltd**,

---

---

**Subject:** basements working group

Dear All

To confirm the first basements working group meeting will be:

3pm Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February  
Kensington Town Hall

Please come to the Customer Service Centre (accessed off the courtyard) rather than the civic reception, which you may pass on your way. We will be in Room 9.

Sorry that you cannot all make it – but thanks for getting back so swiftly on your availability, and we have managed to get a good balance of interests.

Look forward to seeing you there.

**Penelope Tollitt** | Head of Policy and Design | The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea  
Kensington Town Hall, \_\_\_\_\_

Register at MyRBKC to receive updates about planning, parking, news and more: [www.rbkc.gov.uk/myRBKC](http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/myRBKC)  
<http://www.rbkc.gov.uk/planningandconservation.aspx>  
[Web](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Youtube](#)

\*\*\*\*\*

The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.  
This e-mail may contain information which is confidential,  
legally privileged and/or copyright protected. This e-mail  
is intended for the addressee only. If you receive this in  
error, please contact the sender and delete the material  
from your computer.

\*\*\*\*\*