

Code for Sustainable Homes – Provision of Scheme management services

Guidance Notes for Prospective Service Providers

Introduction

The Code for Sustainable Homes was launched by Government in December 2006 and became operational in April 2007. Its implementation in the field is being managed by BRE Global (formerly known as BRE Certification Ltd) under contract to CLG using arrangements based on BRE's EcoHomes operating systems. Under these arrangements all Code assessments are carried out under licence by a wide range of organisations. BRE Global's role is to ensure that CLG's requirements are met through the provision of:

- assessor training,
- registration and monitoring;
- quality assurance of assessments,
- certification,
- investigation and resolution of complaints
- maintenance of records.

BRE Global's operating systems are accredited by UKAS under EN 45011 (General Requirements for Bodies Operating Product Certification Schemes) and ISO 17024 (General Requirements for Bodies operating Certification of Persons) to ensure independence, competence, impartiality and confidentiality with transparency in records, complaints procedures, documentation and maintenance of certification. BRE Global currently does not carry out assessments and provides clear separation between the roles of training and assessor qualifications to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

Under the terms of its agreement with CLG, BRE Global will not only licence assessors it will also licence other organisations to provide part or all of the services it provides. This document sets out the basic requirements for organisations wishing to carry out these activities. Any organisation wishing to carry out these services will be required to operate to the same stringent standards that BRE Global are required to do under its contract with CLG and with mechanisms that clearly demonstrate the avoidance of conflicts of interest.

There are two basic options for organisations wishing to offer part or all of these services. These are either a sub-licence agreement to provide a full independent certification service (detailed below as option 1) covering all the certification elements (assessor training and testing; assessor registration; assessment Quality Assurance and technical support; assessment certification) or a sub-contract agreement for partial services working within the parameters of BRE Global's existing accredited services. Within the sub-contract arrangement there is a multitude of ways in which an organisation can work with BRE Global from; simply providing labour to conduct specific tasks; to the provision of full modules of the scheme. It is not practical to detail all these within this document however the broad terms of what can be agreed is detailed in option 2 below. BRE Global will adopt similar principles to those set out below when negotiating any such agreements.

Option 1 – Independent Accreditation under EN45011- Sub-licence agreement

A full certification service may be provided by other organisations independently under licence from BRE Global. CLG require that organisations adopting this option must be UKAS accredited under EN45011 and/or ISO 17024 as appropriate.

If the organisation is not UKAS accredited but has a quality system in place that is compliant with EN 45011 / ISO 17024. BRE Global can audit this to provide a quicker route to market (formal accreditation can take some months whereas BRE Global could make a decision within days of an audit).

For organisations who are already UKAS accredited it will be UKAS who will audit compliance with the requirements of EN 45011/17024 as appropriate. However, to ensure BRE Global's obligation to meet CLG's stringent quality standards that the Code is applied and operated correctly, BRE Global would conduct an initial audit to assure themselves that the organisation has the technical competence, has interface systems in place that are compatible with the BRE Global systems (IT protocols etc will be given to applicants) and to ensure consistency of application of the Code throughout the market. To avoid conflicts of interest, BRE Global will rely on UKAS to conduct subsequent site audits whilst BRE Global will conduct remote surveillance such as mystery shopping to ensure that the quality of the services delivered is maintained.

In all cases the sub- licensee must have applied to UKAS before BRE issues the sub-licence and be fully accredited by UKAS for this service within 18 months of licence issue.

The sub-licensed organisations will be responsible for the training and examination material and the development and operation of their own operating procedures and business systems. CLG require that BRE Global maintain a central Code Database, therefore sub- licensees will be required to input all assessor and assessment data into this database.

In order to achieve the above, all organisations will be required to establish systems that ensure the attributes as set out in EN45011 such as:

- Confidentiality
- Independence, impartiality and objectivity
- Staff competence
- Record keeping
- Complaints procedures
- Quality systems and document control
- Use of licenses and certificates
- Surveillance
- Certification decision making
- Avoidance of conflicts of interest

If this option were taken, the Organisation cannot provide their own assessment services under the Code whether certified by them or by any other organisation unless they can clearly demonstrate to UKAS that no

conflict of interest exists. Under a sub-licence agreement the organisation takes full responsibility for the services it provides including the competence and support of its assessors and the certification of the dwelling assessments. The certificates the organisation issues will carry their logo and legal responsibility. BRE Global will carry no liability for the services provided by the organisation.

BRE Global will provide the following services to the licensee:

1. Assessor database maintenance and support.
2. Assessment database and support

BRE Global will maintain a central database onto which all the assessed dwellings will be registered, regardless of the accreditation scheme operator, for reporting statistics to CLG. Sub-licensees will be supplied with the format and access rights to lodge their registrations. The precise nature of this database and the controls that are needed is under development. Where necessary interfaces with other organisations databases can be developed and a fee will be charged at BRE Global's normal commercial rates for time spent on this activity.

Fees will be levied on the sub-licensees organisation by BRE Global for the following activities:

- each assessor trained,
- an annual fee per registered assessor
- a fee per assessment
- a fee per dwelling lodged.

A charge will also be made for auditing the organisation for compliance with terms of the licence and for on going 'remote surveillance'. Details of the fees and charges for the sub-licence are given in Annex A.

If the organisation is not UKAS accredited but has applied to UKAS and is committed to gaining accreditation, BRE Global can help with the provision of training and documents to help them achieve this.

The process for achieving a sub-licence is illustrated by the flow diagram in Annex B.

Option 2 – Sub-contracting of BRE Global services to external organisations for partial services

BRE Global uses external organisations and individuals in its operation of the Code at present. BRE Global is prepared to sub-contract a wide range of activities at competitive commercial rates to enable other organisations to participate in the scheme. This offer relates to the following service areas:

- Assessor training and testing
- Assessor registration
- Assessment Quality Assurance
- Assessment certification

Subcontractors will operate under their own or BRE Global's existing procedures and business systems relating to the activities being carried out. In so doing they must comply with the relevant requirements (typically; confidentiality; independence; impartiality and objectivity; staff competence; record keeping; complaints procedures; and document control as a minimum) of EN 45011 for the service they are providing BRE Global will provide training and relevant material required to carry out these services. They will also monitor performance.

Sub-contracting organisations may carry out these services under dual branding, but it would be BRE Global's logo that appears on any certificate. BRE Global would be willing to consider dual branding a certificate where an organisation requests this and has significant involvement in the customer interface such as finding new clients.

BRE Global will provide the following services to the subcontractor:

1. Development of systems for and with the organisation and training in their use.
2. Initial and ongoing audit of organisations activities
3. Support and advice on interpretation of the standard and systems
4. Ongoing use of BRE Global's operating systems

Sub-contractors will not normally be able to provide assessment services where the services they provide relate to Quality Assurance, Certification, Assessor training/monitoring and registration. This is to avoid conflicts of interest arising.

Next Steps

Organisations wishing to pursue these opportunities should contact David Crowhurst, Operations Director, BRE Global at 'crowhurstd@bre.co.uk'. BRE Global will consider all such applications and if appropriate enter into negotiations with the prospective service provider over the detailed implementation of these principles relating to the businesses to be carried out.

Annex A – Fees and charges relating to sub-licence agreements

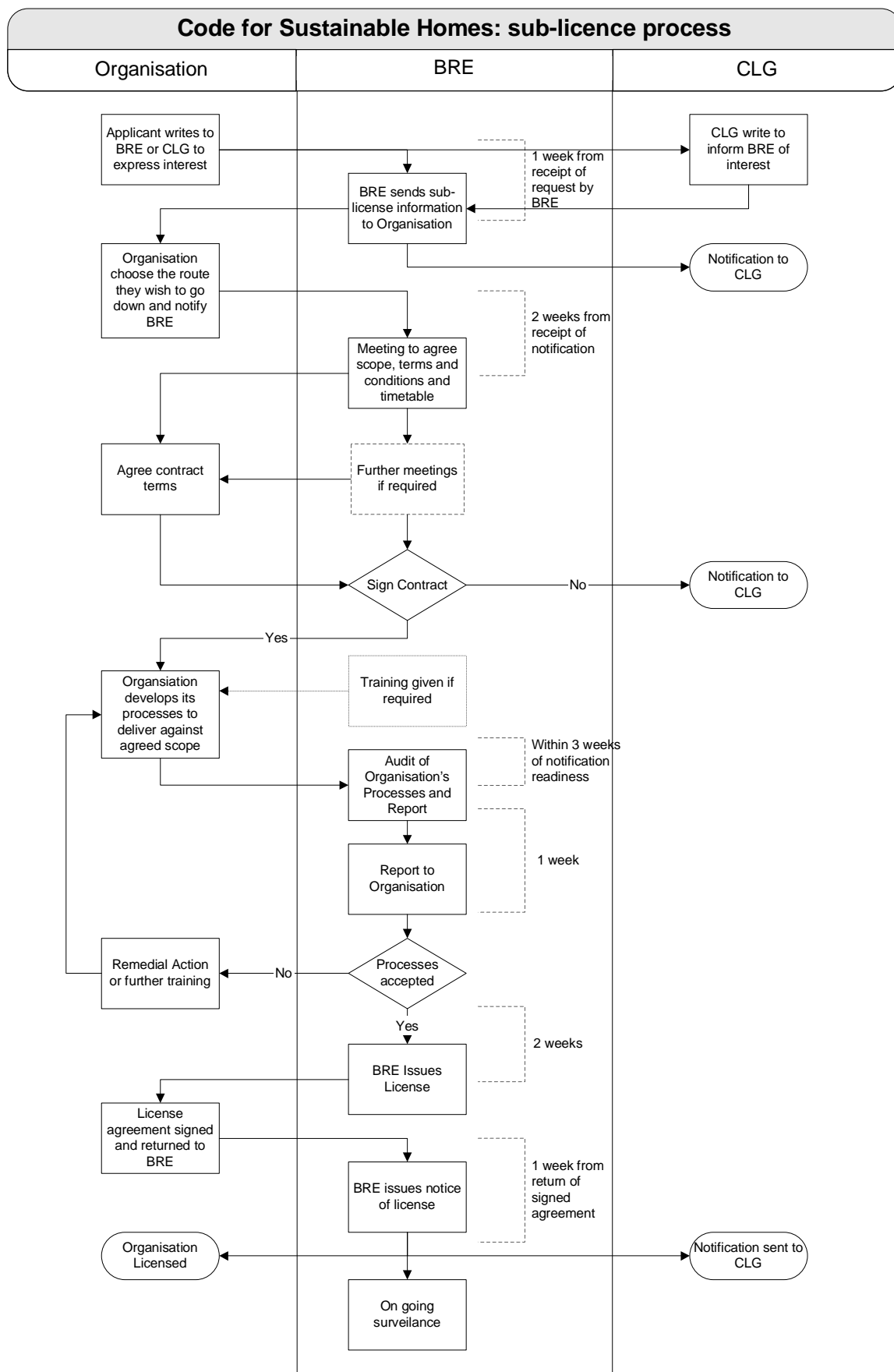
Independent Accreditation under EN 45011

ACTIVITY	Fee	Notes
Auditing and Quality Assurance		
Pre-license audit of licensee	£1500	For compliance with the Code
6 monthly 'remote surveillance'	£1000	For compliance with the Code
Assessor and Assessment Fees		
Training and licensing of assessors	10% of BRE's training and examination fees per delegate plus 10% of BRE's licence fees per licensed assessor per annum	Based on BRE's published scale of fees (Annex C)
Lodgement fee for each dwelling	£3	Central database maintained by BRE Global
Certification per dwelling	10% of BRE's Certification fee	Based on BRE's published scale of fees (Annex C)
Support Services		
Specialist advice and help	£140 per hr (£1000 per day)	Where licensee needs BRE's help to answer questions or tackle problems with Code interpretation etc.

Notes:

1. BRE Global will also consider other costing models (subject to negotiation)
2. Fees for sub-contracting will be negotiated depending on the level of service provided and support required from BRE Global
3. The fees have been calculated based on assumptions on market size and take up indicated in the CLG impact assessment
4. BRE Global will review these fees annually and reserve the right to amend these fees should the market size be significantly different from that predicted.

Annex B: Process for reaching Sub-licence Agreement



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Annex C Proposed Scale of Fees for Code

Code for Sustainable Homes	
<u>Training Fees including Examinations Fee</u>	<u>£1100 per delegate</u>
<u>Annual License fee</u>	<u>£375 per assessor</u>
<u>Certification Fee</u> <u>(Covers both Design and Post Construction stages)</u>	<u>£37 per dwelling</u> subject to minimum of £375.00 per development