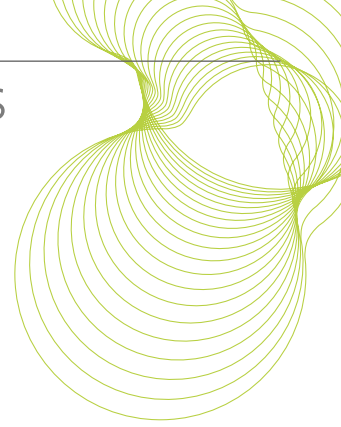


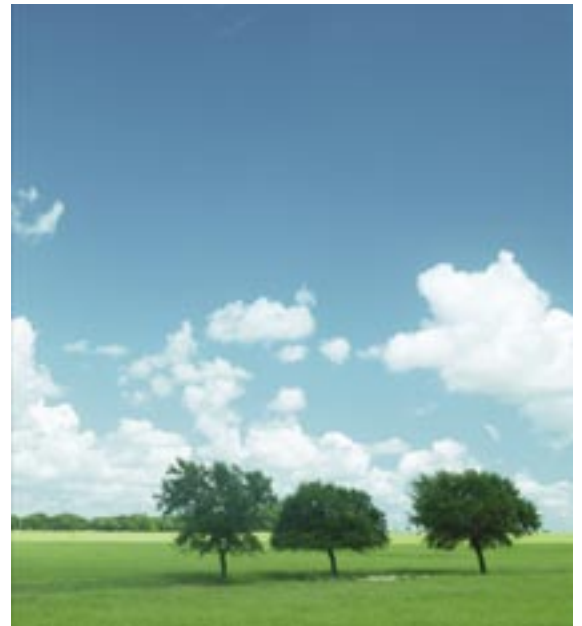
EcoHomes – the environmental rating for homes



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Part of BRE's BREEAM family, EcoHomes is an assessment method that rates the environmental qualities of new and renovated dwellings. Buildings are verified by independent assessors and rated on a scale of Pass, Good, Very Good and Excellent.



The scheme rewards developers who improve the environmental performance of a development through good design, rather than through high capital cost solutions. It demonstrates

- sustainability credentials to planning authorities
- green credentials to investors
- good environmental design to purchasers.

For owners and occupiers, the EcoHomes label means

- reduced running costs through greater energy and water efficiency, and reduced maintenance
- healthy, comfortable and flexible internal environments
- access to local amenities
- less dependence on the car.

EcoHomes is designed to help tackle climate change, resource use and impact on wildlife and balance these issues against the need to provide safe and healthy homes and a high quality of life. It helps reduce the environmental impact of a development through good design and informed decisions in the following areas

- energy
- water
- pollution
- materials
- transport
- ecology and land use
- health and well-being.

EcoHomes is the homes version of BREEAM. BREEAM leads the world in setting benchmarks for the environmental performance of buildings.



Assessments are carried out at the design stage in a similar way to a SAP rating. Every house type on a site is considered, but the award is given for the entire development. This means developers can use the result to promote whole sites.

A Post Construction Review can also be carried out. This confirms that all features specified at the design stage have been implemented. A separate certificate is issued in this case.

EcoHomes is the homes version of BREEAM, sponsored by the NHBC. BREEAM leads the world in setting benchmarks for the environmental performance of buildings. It is independent and authoritative and is based on many years of research carried out by BRE, the construction industry and Government.

How to get an EcoHomes assessment

Assessments are undertaken by licensed assessors, who are trained and monitored by BRE. A list of assessors is available from BRE and from the EcoHomes website.

The developer provides design and specification information to the assessor who checks that the relevant information has been provided, and determines the rating. The assessment is then sent to BRE for quality assurance and certification. All EcoHomes assessments are covered by BRE's quality management procedures to ensure a consistent approach and level of service.

Design stage assessment

The assessment process is carried out in three stages.

Stage 1 – Specification assessment Many issues, such as materials, can be assessed from the general building specification, provided they are applicable to the whole development.

Stage 2 – House type assessment For standard house types, other issues are assessed, such as energy efficiency and water use.

Stage 3 – Development assessment This stage completes the assessment and covers remaining issues, such as a site's ecological value and transport.

Stage 1 and 2 can be carried out without reference to a specific site. This avoids duplication on different developments and keeps costs to a minimum.

Post Construction Review

This review confirms that the design stage rating has been achieved. It is carried out when the homes have been completed and can be performed as houses are released for sale. It will often involve a site survey by the assessor.

Fees

There is a recommended fee scale for EcoHomes assessments. Licensed assessors will provide a quote dependent on the size and complexity of the site; the specification or house types; and the degree of information provided.

Training

Assessor training courses are held regularly around the country.

Publications

The EcoHomes publication and the Green Guide to Housing Specification can be purchased online at: www.brebookshop.com

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