

# Technical Bulletin

## March 2018

### Welcome to the ecmk quarterly Technical Bulletin

Welcome to the ecmk Technical bulletin for this quarter.

In this issue we cover:

- Domestic: New conventions v10.0
- Domestic: Smarter Surveys
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- Domestic: Definition of a “window”
- Domestic: Back boilers & secondary heating
- Non-domestic: Release of iSBEM v5.4.a (and patch)
- Non-domestic: Convention 7.07, Modern LED Lighting
- Non-domestic: EPC Wales
- Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards (MEES)
- Lodgement of incorrect EPCs
- Training Dates for March

Please do contact us if you wish to see clarification of any issues for future bulletins.

Many thanks and we hope you enjoy the bulletin.

*Stephen Farrow*  
Scheme Manager

## Domestic: New conventions v10.0

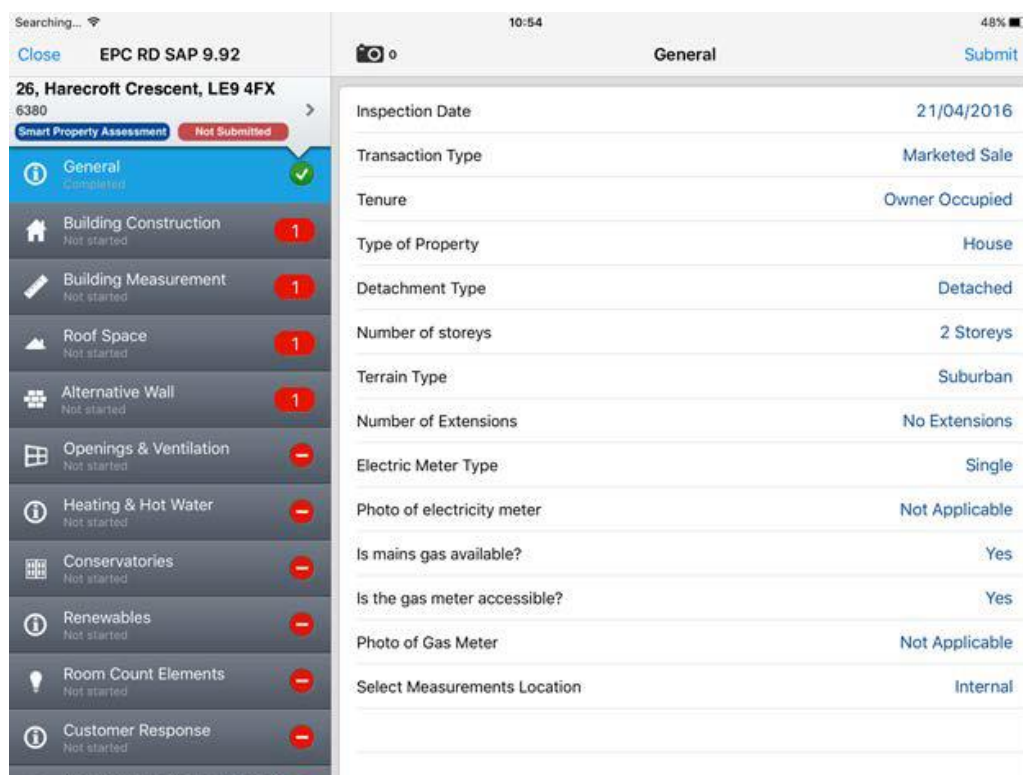
Just a reminder that new RdSAP conventions came into force from December 31<sup>st</sup> 2017. They are available now within the Scheme Documents section of Assessor Hub and we would recommend that you download a copy and look through the main changes. There are some very important changes, notably to Convention 1.01, regarding the use of RdSAP.

We will be offering regular one hour CPD sessions during March and it is strongly recommended that you attend one of these and gain your CPD as well.

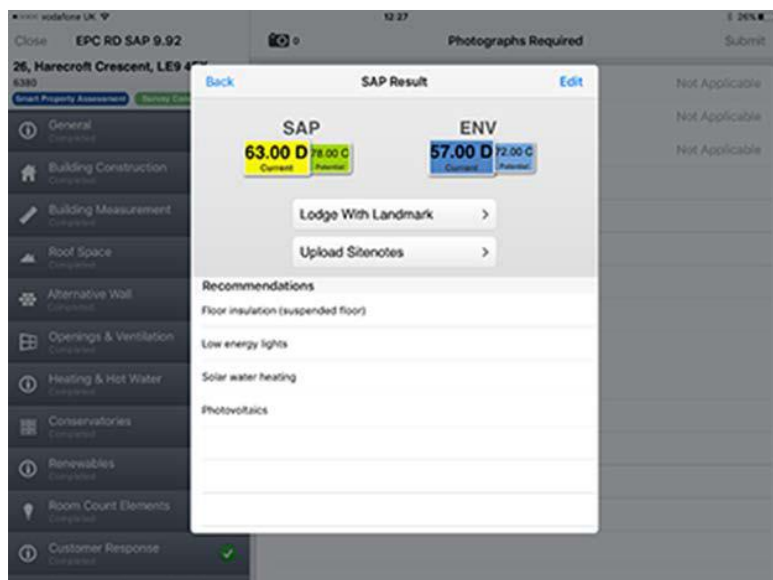
## Domestic: Smarter Surveys

ecmk members have **FREE** use of eTech's Smart Survey App which is available on iPad and iPhone. There are huge benefits to using the App over paper based site notes and we have developed the Smarter Survey Webinar to show this. The webinar is aimed at DEAs who are not currently using the Smart Survey EPC App and are still using pen and paper for their EPCs. This course will cover:

- The benefits of the App
- Live demonstration of how it works
- How to get started using the App



Section	Field	Value
General	Inspection Date	21/04/2016
	Transaction Type	Marketed Sale
	Tenure	Owner Occupied
	Type of Property	House
	Detachment Type	Detached
	Number of storeys	2 Storeys
	Terrain Type	Suburban
	Number of Extensions	No Extensions
	Electric Meter Type	Single
	Photo of electricity meter	Not Applicable
	Is mains gas available?	Yes
	Is the gas meter accessible?	Yes
	Photo of Gas Meter	Not Applicable
	Select Measurements Location	Internal
Building Construction	Building Construction	Not started
	Building Measurement	Not started
	Roof Space	Not started
	Alternative Wall	Not started
	Openings & Ventilation	Not started
	Heating & Hot Water	Not started
	Conservatories	Not started
	Renewables	Not started
	Room Count Elements	Not started
	Customer Response	Not started



Please see our CPD schedule at the end of this bulletin for our next Smarter Survey Webinar.

## Domestic: Cylinder insulation

Convention 6.05 covers the various types of cylinder insulation that you may come across during surveys and how they are recorded in RdSAP. Below are examples of the insulation described in the convention:



The above are all unvented pressurised steel or plastic encased hot-water storage units. Despite their differing appearance and volume, the insulation is recorded in the same way for each as 50mm factory-applied foam. Please also note that it is also assumed that there is a cylinder thermostat present.



Elson tanks are a relatively old type of hot water storage unit and are quite rare as many have been replaced. However, the convention states that the insulation thickness should be recorded where possible and entered as factory applied insulation. If you are unable to measure the insulation thickness, then “no access” should be recorded. There is also no assumption for a cylinder thermostat so you should check for its presence.



There may be some cases where you find a cylinder that has both spray foam and jacket insulation. The convention has been recently updated to explain how this is recorded. It explains that you should record the thickness of the spray foam, plus 1/3 of the depth of the jacket.

For example, you might have a cylinder that has 25mm spray foam and an 80mm jacket. Therefore,  $\frac{1}{3}$  of 80mm is 26.7mm. Add that to the 25mm spray foam to get a total of 51.7mm. This is then inputted as 50mm. Please ensure that you always round down to the nearest entry value.



## Domestic: Definition of a “window”

Convention 2.14 has been re-written to simplify the definition of a window. It has removed confusion of the percentage of glazing required to a door to be classed as a window. Simply put, a window is an opening in an external wall or roof of a building, fitted with glass or similar material, usually in a frame that admits light. If it can be opened, then it is primarily to admit fresh air and not to provide entry into the property (except for patio doors). Patio doors may be treated as windows due to the high ratio of glazing in relation to the area of the whole opening.



## Domestic: Back boilers & secondary heating

Sometimes back boilers are difficult to identify as they are hiding behind the fire. Things to look out for:

- No evidence of a normal boiler but radiators exist
- A programmer in the living room next to the fireplace
- They will always have a cylinder
- Often found in rented property – particularly social housing

Back boiler model ID plates can sometimes be found underneath gas fires which can then be used to locate on the PCDB.



For gas back boilers, **separate efficiencies** apply to the boiler and to the associated room heater. This means that:

1. If the back boiler provides space heating, it should be defined as the main heating system, and the gas fire should be indicated as the secondary heater.
2. If the back boiler provides domestic hot water only, the boiler efficiency is used for water heating as the gas fire efficiency for space heating either as main or as secondary.

Gas back boilers are usually found behind open-flued gas fires without fan assistance. Note that the fire and the boiler share the same flue.



For **oil** and **solid fuel** room heaters with boilers, the efficiency is an **overall value** (ie sum of heat to water and heat to room). This means that:

1. If the boiler provides space heater, the combination of boiler and room heater should be defined as the main heating system
2. If the boiler provides domestic hot water only, the overall efficiency should be used as the efficiency both for water heating and for the room heater (room heater as main or a secondary heater)

Therefore, record the fireplace as secondary heating if the back boiler provides water heating only and ignore if it provides space heating.

## Non-domestic: Release of isBEM v5.4.a (and patch)

BRE have released a new version of isBEM, version 5.4.a. The list of changes can be found here: <https://www.uk-ncm.org.uk/newsdetails.jsp?id=75>

The previous version of isBEM v5.3.a will continue to work with ECMK lodgements until **20<sup>th</sup> March 2018**, but we recommend that you upgrade to v5.4.a at the earliest opportunity. Please follow <https://www.uk-ncm.org.uk/download.jsp> to download the latest version.

There has also been a patch release for v5.4.a which should also be downloaded and installed using the link above.

Please note that isBEM v4.1.g should still be used to carry EPCs and compliance checks in Northern Ireland.

## Non-domestic: Convention 7.07 Modern Lighting

Convention 7.07 was introduced as a workaround to reflect the improvements within modern LED lighting. Ideally, lighting design information should be recorded. However, in the absence of a lighting design, assessors should use “Lighting parameters not available or unknown” and select the appropriate lamp type.

Convention 7.07 allowed the selection of “LED” for LED bulbs in bayonet/ES/SES fittings and “T5” for all other types of LED lamp. This was because iSBEM had not kept up with the rapid development of LED lighting.



However, since the release of iSBEM v5.4.a, LED lighting has been improved somewhat making this convention obsolete. Therefore, if you are currently assessing LED lighting using iSBEM v5.4.a ignore this convention and record as “LED”. This convention is due to be removed at the next revision.

If you still have outstanding projects in iSBEM v5.3.a then please apply this convention. For third party assessment software, please refer to the software provider to determine if they have implemented the update to LED lighting.

## Non-domestic: EPC Wales

Some postcodes within North Wales indicate that the weather location should be set to Manchester when using the CEPC postcode lookup file (see Scheme Documents on assessorhub). However, to produce an EPC for a building in Wales, the “Purpose of Analysis”, “EPC Wales” must be selected. Similarly, SBEM calculations for buildings in Wales must use the purpose “Wales Building Regulations Part L 2014”. Currently, this will require the weather location, “Cardiff” to be used. This therefore takes precedence over the postcode lookup file.

## MEES: The Domestic Private Rented Property Minimum Standards

You will probably be aware that this Act was enacted in the Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.

We will continue to provide training sessions within our normal CPD schedule. Please see our training dates at the end of this bulletin.

The key points (simplified) are:

1. The average cost saving in annual fuel bills is £1150 where a property is improved from EPC band G to E, or £470, from F to E. This is the driver for implementing this new Legislation.
2. The first part of The Act comes into force from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018. This will establish a minimum energy standard for both domestic and non-domestic rented property (NOT SOCIAL HOUSING), affecting new tenancies from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2018.
3. The minimum EPC rating under this Act is E, so properties that are rated F or G will come under the scope of the Act.
4. The intention of the Act, is based upon the principle of “no cost to the Landlord so Landlords will only be required to make improvements where third-party finance can be used, eg Green Deal.
5. The second part of the Act, which comes into force two years later in April 2020, applies to all private rented properties, not just new tenancies.

**A full copy of the Act is available on line and will be covered in the webinars.**

## Lodgement of Incorrect EPCs

Assessors are reminded of convention 9.03 in relation to notifying the scheme of an incorrect or defective EPC lodged at Landmark.

### **Convention 9.03: Lodgement of incorrect EPC:**

*If you lodge an EPC in error and lodge a corrected EPC, inform your accreditation scheme so that the erroneous one can be marked ‘not for issue’.*

Assessors must email [audit@ecmk.co.uk](mailto:audit@ecmk.co.uk) with the RRN of the incorrect EPC and the RRN of the replacement EPC.

EPCs will not be removed from the register unless a replacement EPC has been lodged and the RRN supplied to the scheme.

If you do have any further questions or queries then please contact us via [audit@ecmk.co.uk](mailto:audit@ecmk.co.uk)



## Upcoming Training and CPD during March

Course	Date	Cost (+ vat)*
<b>CPD – webinars:</b>		
Smarter Surveys: An introduction to the Smart EPC app	Thurs 1 March @ 1700	£15
Mini Audit: Tips & hints how not to fail	Fri 2 March @ 1600	£15
NDEA Common Pitfalls	Thurs 8 March @ 0830	£15
Primary Heating Fundamentals	Fri 9 March @ 1600	£15
Smarter Surveys: An introduction to the Smart EPC app	Tues 13 March @ 0830	£15
MEES (Domestic Private Rented Property Min Standard)	Wed 14 March @ 1200	£15
MEES (Domestic Private Rented Property Min Standard)	Thurs 15 March @ 1700	£15
Measuring & Modelling	Fri 16 March @ 1600	£15
NDEA Common Pitfalls	Mon 19 March @ 1600	£15
Secondary Heating	Tues 20 March @ 0830	£15
NDEA CPD Bootcamp (1 day)	Wed 21 March @ 0900	£135
Smarter Surveys: An introduction to the Smart EPC app	Wed 21 March @ 1200	£15
Advanced Heating	Thurs 22 March @ 1700	£15
Legionella Risk Assessment Course (1 day)	Fri 23 March @ 0900	£125
Rooms in the Roof	Fri 23 March @ 1600	£15
MEES (Domestic Private Rented Property Min Standard)	Tues 27 March @ 0830	£15
Smarter Surveys: An introduction to the Smart EPC app	Thurs 29 March @ 1730	£15

*\*Costs listed are for ecmk members*

**Click [here](#) find out more and to book your place!**

*Reminder! Don't forget to use up your 4 free hours of CPD for 2018.*

*If you are looking for something more bespoke, we can deliver courses nationwide.*

For further information, more course dates and to book your place:  
Email: [training@ecmk.co.uk](mailto:training@ecmk.co.uk) or Visit: [www.ecmk.co.uk/training](http://www.ecmk.co.uk/training)

