

29 July 2010

Key External Partners

Dear Colleague,

YOUR IDEAS ON FUTURE CHANGES TO THE BUILDING REGULATIONS

This letter goes to key external partners on the Building Regulations. It provides information on the programme of work we are undertaking to establish the changes needed to those regulations. It seeks your engagement in the process by asking you to submit your evidence and ideas to the Department by the end of August.

Building Regulations have achieved a great deal over the years. They have contributed to a fall of more than 50 per cent in the number of fire deaths in the home since 1981. On energy efficiency, current new homes standards should already deliver savings of 70 per cent compared to 1990. Our next steps on the road to zero carbon will deliver a further improvement of 25 per cent on today's standards.

Building Regulations are a powerful tool, but they need to be managed and maintained carefully. We want to ensure that the Building Regulations are proportionate and remain fit-for-purpose, responding appropriately to changes in technology, science, build practices and construction techniques. We want to hear the views of our external partners, therefore, on how the regulations can be improved, added to, or slimmed down and your suggestions as to how we can deliver even better levels of compliance in the future.

As part of this, Ministers have indicated that they would be particularly interested in views and suggestions about compliance with the Building Regulations. This is in response to concerns that lack of compliance undermines what the regulations seek to achieve. We are keen to ensure that savings are really delivered and that our achievements are real and not theoretical.

Our work needs to be underpinned by robust evidence so that we can make the right choices and understand clearly the costs and benefits. So we would also ask you for evidence to back up and support your ideas.

Please send your ideas and any evidence you may have to building.regulations@communities.gsi.gov.uk by the end of August.

Department of Communities and Local Government
Sustainable Buildings, Zone 5/G10
Eland House, Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU England

Email:
building.regulations@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Please also use your influence to encourage the people and other bodies that you represent to actively involve themselves in this process too.

We will take all the ideas e-mailed to us, and together with those already received from the Cabinet Office's Your Freedom and this Department's Cut Red Tape exercises, feed into further discussions with external partners and the Building Regulations Advisory Committee in the autumn. This will help us to decide our priorities for improving the Building Regulations with a plan to consult fully in late 2011 on a set of detailed proposals for change for 2013.

Also, as we continue to move forward with this work in the coming months, many of you may well be approached by members of my team asking for your further help in this process, for example, perhaps in participation or even hosting of workshops and events. I would ask that you consider these requests favourably.

We hope that this will be the start of a long and fruitful dialogue and thank you in advance for your help with this exercise.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Sturrock". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SARAH STURROCK