

# Experienced assessors in demand

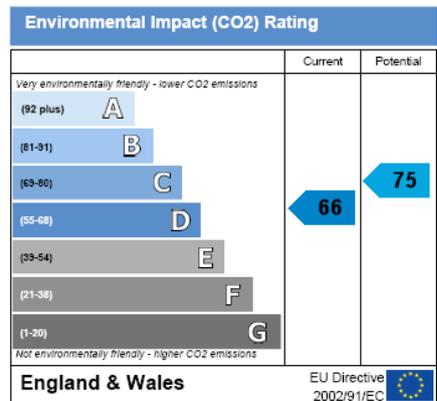
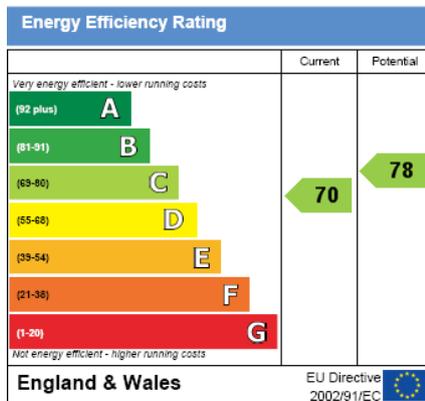
By Sam Parkes MRICS, Director and Energy Assessor for P2 Surveyors Ltd.

Whilst it is now over a year since Energy Performance Certificates became mandatory for all commercial properties being marketed for sale or let, research at the end of 2009 concluded that only around 40% actually had certificates available.

This suggests that many property owners are still unclear about the requirements. Although vendors and landlords of all commercial buildings are legally obliged to provide an EPC when their property is marketed for sale or rental, few seem to understand the urgency of this requirement. The answer, in its simplest terms, is to provide the EPC at the very earliest opportunity: ideally prior to publication of any marketing literature and any viewings being conducted. In any event, it is vital to have one in place before entering into a contract to sell or let.

During the first year, as the property sector adjusted to the new requirements, the most common penalty from Trading Standards Officers for non-compliance was simply insistence on the belated production of a certificate. However, already in 2010, we are starting to see more fines for non-compliance being issued and, at 12.5% of the rateable value of the property (capped at a maximum of £5,000) they are not insignificant.

In the leisure sector, the very nature of a typical sale means that the diversity of a property's EPC requirements needs



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careful attention. A mixed leisure site, comprising not only the core commercial property but also separate residential accommodation and exempt buildings (such as static caravans or open external stores), will prove quite a challenge for an inexperienced assessor.

With a significant number of pubs and restaurants coming to the market in the past year, assessors specific to the leisure industry have gained a detailed practical understanding of the exact requirements for the production of certificates. However, with a smaller number of hotels, golf courses and mixed leisure sites on the market, only a small number of assessors have had hands-on experience dealing with these more complex properties.

As a result, it is well worth seeking out those companies in the EPC market place

who have sufficient experience of the sector, with detailed knowledge of the full legislation and requirements, thereby enabling them to provide accurate and cost-effective certification.

For further information contact:

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P2 Surveyors is a leading HIP and EPC provider, based in Gloucestershire, with specialist knowledge and experience in leisure, commercial and residential energy certification.