

FROM THE HEAD OF DIVISION
Philip Irwin



Department of
**Finance and
Personnel**

www.dfpni.gov.uk

Properties Division
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG
Tel. No. 028 9051 2623
Fax: 028 9082 3282
E-mail: Philip.Irwin@dfpni.gov.uk

Date: 9 July 2010

Dear Consultee,

**CONSULTATION ON PROPOSALS FOR THE BUILDING REGULATIONS
(NORTHERN IRELAND) 2011: PHASE ONE**

I am writing to invite you to respond to the Department's proposals (Phase 1) for replacing the Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 with a new set of Building Regulations (to be called The Building Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2011), together with proposals for changing the format and purpose of the accompanying Technical Booklets.

Building Regulations apply to most building work and are made principally to ensure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of people in and around building, the conservation of fuel and power, the protection and enhancement of the environment and the promotion of sustainable development.

In March 2009 the Building Regulations (Amendment) Act 2009 received Royal Assent. This Act, amongst other things, allowed for the move from deemed-to-satisfy Regulations to the more flexible guidance-based system. Such a system already operates elsewhere in the UK and in Ireland. As a result of this move, the existing Technical Booklets that give deemed-to-satisfy solutions require replacing with guidance-based documents.

This consultation represents the first phase of three planned phases of consultation to introduce a complete new set of regulations. Phase 2 & 3 consultations will take place later in 2010.

Phase 1 consists of:

- Technical uplifts and new guidance-based Technical Booklets for Part C (Preparation of site and resistance to moisture) and Part G (Sound insulation of dwellings), and
- the introduction of new guidance-based Technical Booklets for Parts E (Fire safety), H (Stairs, ramps, guarding and protection from impact), N (Drainage) and V (Glazing) with no or little regulatory change.

Phase 2 will consist of:

- Technical uplifts and new guidance-based Technical Booklets for Parts F (Conservation of fuel and power), K (Ventilation) and L (Combustion appliances and fuel storage systems),
- the introduction of new guidance-based Technical Booklets for Part D (Structure) Part P, (Sanitary appliances and unvented hot water storage systems) and Part R (Access to and use of buildings) with no or little regulatory change, and
- amendments to Part A (Interpretation and general) including consequential changes required as a result of proposed amendments to technical Parts.

Phase 3 will be a review of the Prescribed Fees Regulations.

As well as this letter the full package of consultation documents, accessed using the web address below, contains the following –

- Consultation paper;
- Consultation response form;
- Draft Regulatory Impact Assessment; and
- Draft Technical Booklets for Parts C, G, E, H, N and V.

The draft Regulatory Impact Assessment outlines the main issues and gives an assessment of the benefits of these proposed amendments and an estimate of the principal costs of the proposals.

Responding to this consultation

Should you wish to take part in this consultation the package of consultation documents can be accessed online on the Building Standards Branch website: -

www.buildingregulationsni.gov.uk

A hard copy of the documents or a copy in an alternative format may be obtained by telephoning 028 9051 2704 or by emailing karen.mckernon@dfpni.gov.uk.

I look forward to receiving your comments and views concerning the proposals contained in this consultation package. In order to assist our analysis of responses you are asked to use the Response Form included on the web site and to submit your reply electronically.

Responses should preferably be returned electronically to karen.mckernon@dfpni.gov.uk or alternatively posted or faxed to: -

Consultation Co-ordinator
Department of Finance and Personnel
Building Standards Branch
Level 5
Causeway Exchange
1-7 Bedford Street
Belfast
BT2 7EG
Fax: 028 9082 3282

The Department will consider all responses to this consultation received on or before the closing date, which is **4:00 pm on 29th October 2010**. *(It is important to note that submissions made after this date cannot be considered).*

Code of practice on consultations

In light of the requirements of the Code of Practice on Access to Government and the Freedom of Information Act, responses may be made available to the public on request. We may also wish to make responses to this consultation available to the Northern Ireland Assembly and for public inspection either at the Building Standards Branch Office or website.

You have the option of indicating that you wish your response to remain confidential and the Department will generally respect that request. Should it be decided that the public interest must override that request, the Department will contact you before disclosure and if appropriate, provide an opportunity for your response to be withdrawn.

If you have any comments about the consultation process itself (rather than the content of the document) these should be directed to the consultation co-ordinator at the postal or e-mail address or fax number given above.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Irwin', written in a cursive style.

Philip Irwin