

Proposal to Establish Online Software for Optimised Code for Sustainable Homes Assessments

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The British Government requires all new housing to undergo a Code for Sustainable Homes (CfSH) assessment. The assessment is a tick-box exercise with 34 'credits' covering topics from water management to energy utilisation, each requiring precise documentary evidence to prove compliance. Credits are summed to give an overall CfSH rating.

The majority of the CfSH credits can be achieved through providing low-cost technologies such as low-flush toilets and energy efficient light bulbs, however there is no clear algorithm that developers can use to achieve the most cost effective CfSH rating.

I propose establishing online computer software using a database of compliant technologies and suppliers to provide an optimised method for CfSH assessment of any given development.

Developers would benefit from the lowest-cost CfSH compliant assessment. Sustainability consultants would be relieved from producing repetitive assessments.

Assessor fees are currently between 0.1% and 0.5% of the overall development costs: on a 100-dwelling project, the fee may be in the region of £15,000. Once established the online software would require minimum running costs, so could significantly reduce this fee.

The proposal seeks support for expertise in software development and business planning. This will be a good opportunity for collaboration between LBS and UCL.

Biography

David Unwin is a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Chemistry, University College London. He came to UCL after working for a year as a sustainability consultant for a large engineering firm in London, regularly performing Code for Sustainable Homes assessments and the commercial buildings equivalent (BREEAM).