



Department for
Communities and
Local Government

Energy Performance of Buildings Data:

Responses to DCLG Survey



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Introduction

The Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 as amended (the Regulations) require Energy Performance Certificates for domestic and non-domestic buildings when built, sold or rented and Display Energy Certificates for buildings greater than 500m² occupied by public authorities and where the building is frequently visited by the public. The regulations also require the inspection of air conditioning systems over 12kW at intervals not exceeding five years. Energy Performance Certificates and Display Energy Certificates detail the overall energy efficiency of a property, known as the energy rating of the building, where A is the most efficient (or A+ in the case of non-domestic buildings) and G is the least efficient. An Air Conditioning Inspection Report will report on the energy efficiency of the system and identify opportunities to save energy and to reduce operating costs.

The data that is collected during the Energy Performance Certificate, Display Energy Certificate and Air Conditioning Inspection Report assessment process is entered ('lodged') on the Energy Performance of Buildings Registers (the registers). Energy Performance Certificates, Display Energy Certificates and Air Conditioning Inspection Reports are created from the data on the registers.

The Department for Communities and Local Government is aware of how useful this data could be to promote energy efficiency. Data is available in accordance with the Regulations and the process for providing register data is described in published guidance¹. However, we are aware of concerns that the conditions placed on access to and use of the data imposed by the Regulations may be restrictive and we are working to make data more accessible in line with the Department's Open Data Strategy². In April 2014, we began publishing quarterly experimental official statistics from data entered on the registers and from early 2015 we intend to publish Display Energy Certificate data. These releases will be followed later in 2015 by a general release of more data held on the registers. In making this data available, we will continue to fulfil our responsibilities under the Data Protection Act 1998 and our obligations as the Information Asset Owner.

To help our consideration of how the existing service may be improved, in September 2013 the Department conducted an online survey of 157 individuals and organisations who had previously expressed an interest in obtaining data from the registers. This report is based on an analysis of the 65 fully completed and therefore useable responses to that survey. Partially completed responses were not included in this analysis.

1

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/362437/141009_Accessing_register_data_under_the_EPB_regulations_2012_-_revised_guidance_clean.pdf

2

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/254495/131031_2013_DCLG_Open_Data_Strategy.pdf

This exercise was not a formal public consultation as described in the Government's *Consultation Principles*³ but was, instead, an informal customer survey designed to seek feedback on the current bulk access data service (which provides data entered onto the register as required by regulation 27(2) of the Energy Performance of Buildings (England and Wales) Regulations 2012 as amended) and on how data from the registers on the energy performance of buildings can be made more accessible.

To ensure that responses remain confidential, where requested, all responses in this report have been anonymised.

Analysis of Responses to Each Question

Q1. I would like my response to this survey to remain confidential

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Yes | 31.3% | 20 |
| No | 68.8% | 44 |
| Answered question | | 64 |

Questions 2 and 3 requested details of organisation name and contact details and so as to maintain confidentiality are not published in this report.

Q4. In what sector does your organisation operate? Select all that apply.

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|-----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Local Government | 46.2% | 30 |
| Other | 30.8% | 20 |
| Energy Assessor | 16.9% | 11 |
| Energy savings advice | 13.8% | 9 |
| Academic Research | 9.2% | 6 |
| Housing provider | 6.2% | 4 |
| Education | 6.2% | 4 |
| Trade Association | 6.2% | 4 |
| Charity | 3.1% | 2 |
| Energy provider | 1.5% | 1 |
| Central Government | 1.5% | 1 |

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255180/Consultation-Principles-Oct-2013.pdf

| | | |
|--------------------------|------|-----------|
| Green Deal provider | 1.5% | 1 |
| Manufacturing | 1.5% | 1 |
| Retailer | 1.5% | 1 |
| Answered question | | 65 |

Those responding as 'other' included the following:

| Organisation | Number of responses |
|---|----------------------------|
| Energy Assessor Accreditation Scheme | 3 |
| Energy Assessor Certification and professional body | 2 |
| Consultant; | 2 |
| Regulator | 1 |
| Online Property Information | 1 |
| Real Estate firm | 1 |
| Commercial property Procurement | 1 |
| Government Advisor | 1 |

Q5. Are you aware of the facility offered by the Register Operator which allows you to gain access to the Bulk Access Data held in the Energy Performance Certificate Registers for a published charge, depending on the amount of data requested? Select one option.

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Yes – 'My organisation is aware of the facility; has never used it; but may want to use it in the future'. | 55.4% | 36 |
| Yes – 'My organisation currently uses the facility / has used it in the past' | 38.5% | 25 |
| No – 'My organisation is not aware of the facility but would be interested in using it in the future' | 4.6% | 3 |
| Not applicable / Not interested | 1.5% | 1 |
| Answered question | | 65 |

Q6. For which of the following purposes does/would your organisation require Bulk Access Data? Select all that apply.

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Promoting energy efficiency improvements | 65.0% | 39 |
| Conducting research into, or developing or analysing policy in relation to energy efficiency of buildings | 61.7% | 37 |

| | | |
|---|-------|-----------|
| Conducting research into the effectiveness/impact of energy efficiency improvements. | 48.3% | 29 |
| Promoting and marketing energy efficiency improvements to support a Green Deal plan. | 43.3% | 26 |
| Identifying / analysing the impact of carbon emissions resulting from buildings with low levels of energy efficiency. | 33.3% | 20 |
| Other | 31.7% | 19 |
| Determining whether energy improvements made for the purposes of a Green Deal plan for specified buildings have been made | 21.7% | 13 |
| Answered question | | 60 |

Q7. For what specific geographical areas might you/did you want Bulk Access Data? Select all that apply.

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Local authority area | 66.7% | 40 |
| England | 51.7% | 31 |
| Wales | 41.7% | 25 |
| Postcode | 38.3% | 23 |
| Street | 36.7% | 22 |
| Ward | 33.3% | 20 |
| Region | 28.3% | 17 |
| Other | 26.7% | 16 |
| County | 21.7% | 13 |
| Constituency | 18.3% | 11 |
| Answered question | | 60 |

Q8. Would you like to identify individual properties in an area?

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Yes | 90% | 54 |
| No | 10% | 6 |
| Answered question | | 60 |

Q9. Would you like to identify trends in an area?

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Yes | 84.5% | 49 |
| No | 15.5% | 9 |
| Answered question | | 58 |

Q10. What Domestic Energy Performance Certificate data are you interested in being provided with? (Select all that apply)

| Answer Options | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|
| Property type | 98.1% | 53 |
| Address of the property (including the postcode) | 94.4% | 51 |
| Energy rating | 90.7% | 49 |
| Whether the property is connected to the gas network | 87.0% | 47 |
| Current CO ₂ emissions | 85.2% | 46 |
| Inspection date | 81.5% | 44 |
| Energy efficiency | 81.5% | 44 |
| Number of habitable rooms | 81.5% | 44 |
| Total floor area | 77.8% | 42 |
| Whether the property is on the top floor (for flats) | 75.9% | 41 |
| Potential energy rating | 75.9% | 41 |
| Current heating cost | 74.1% | 40 |
| Overall dimensions and size of the building | 72.2% | 39 |
| Current energy consumption | 70.4% | 38 |
| Type of heating controls | 70.4% | 38 |
| Proportion of windows which are multi-glazed | 68.5% | 37 |
| Current CO ₂ emissions per floor area | 68.5% | 37 |
| Date data entered onto register | 68.5% | 37 |
| Floor level | 68.5% | 37 |
| Number of heated rooms | 66.7% | 36 |
| If the property is a flat not on the top floor the storey count for the property | 66.7% | 36 |
| Potential heating cost | 66.7% | 36 |
| Potential hot water cost | 64.8% | 35 |
| Types of glazing and area glazed | 64.8% | 35 |
| Current lighting cost | 64.8% | 35 |
| Current hot water cost | 64.8% | 35 |
| Potential lighting cost | 63.0% | 34 |
| Proportion of low energy light bulbs | 63.0% | 34 |
| Potential CO ₂ emissions | 61.1% | 33 |
| Energy tariff | 61.1% | 33 |

| Answer Options | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Number of open fireplaces | 61.1% | 33 |
| Current environmental impact | 59.3% | 32 |
| Number of extensions to the property | 59.3% | 32 |
| Local authority area | 59.3% | 32 |
| Potential environmental impact | 57.4% | 31 |
| Potential energy consumption | 57.4% | 31 |
| Transaction type | 50.0% | 27 |
| Region | 46.3% | 25 |
| County | 44.4% | 24 |
| Constituency | 31.5% | 17 |
| Answered question | | 54 |

Q11. What Non Domestic Energy Performance Certificate data are you interested in being provided with? (Select all that apply)

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Energy rating | 89.2% | 33 |
| Address of the property (including the postcode) | 86.5% | 32 |
| Floor area | 81.1% | 30 |
| Main heating fuel | 78.4% | 29 |
| Property type | 75.7% | 28 |
| Whether the property is a level 3, 4 or 5 building | 73.0% | 27 |
| Whether the property is air conditioned | 73.0% | 27 |
| Whether the property has specialised energy requirements | 70.3% | 26 |
| The renewable sources of energy (if any) used by the property | 70.3% | 26 |
| Inspection date | 70.3% | 26 |
| Date data entered onto register | 67.6% | 25 |
| Other fuel description | 64.9% | 24 |
| Benchmark against other new build or existing properties as appropriate | 64.9% | 24 |
| Region | 51.4% | 19 |
| Local authority area | 51.4% | 19 |
| Transaction type | 43.2% | 16 |
| County | 37.8% | 14 |
| Constituency | 37.8% | 14 |
| Region | 35.1% | 13 |
| Answered question | | 37 |

Q12. What Display Energy Certificate data are you interested in being provided with? (Select all that apply)

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Address of the property (including the postcode) | 89.7% | 35 |
| Energy rating | 89.7% | 35 |
| Property type | 84.6% | 33 |
| Main heating fuel | 74.4% | 29 |
| Inspection date | 74.4% | 29 |
| Floor area | 74.4% | 29 |
| Whether the property is air conditioned | 69.2% | 27 |
| Whether the property is a level 3, 4 or 5 building | 69.2% | 27 |
| Benchmark against other new build or existing properties as appropriate | 66.7% | 26 |
| Date data entered onto register | 66.7% | 26 |
| Proportion of CO ₂ emissions attributable to electricity used in the property | 61.5% | 24 |
| Other fuel description | 61.5% | 24 |
| Proportion of CO ₂ emissions attributable to energy used to heat the property | 61.5% | 24 |
| Whether the property has specialised energy requirements | 61.5% | 24 |
| Local authority area | 59.0% | 23 |
| The energy from renewable sources (if any) used in the property | 59.0% | 23 |
| Building level | 59.0% | 23 |
| Proportion of CO ₂ emissions from renewables used in the property in current year | 51.3% | 20 |
| Region | 43.6% | 17 |
| County | 41.0% | 16 |
| Constituency | 35.9% | 14 |
| Answered question | | 39 |

Q13. What Air-conditioning Inspection Report data are you interested in being provided with? (Select all that apply)

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Address of the property (including the postcode) | 94.7% | 18 |
| Energy efficiency rating | 84.2% | 16 |
| Inspection date | 84.2% | 16 |
| Property type | 78.9% | 15 |

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Date the data entered onto register | 68.4% | 13 |
| Proportion of CO ₂ emissions attributable to electricity use in current year; | 68.4% | 13 |
| Name of building | 68.4% | 13 |
| Proportion of CO ₂ emissions attributable to energy used to heat the property in current year | 63.2% | 12 |
| Name of the equipment owner | 52.6% | 10 |
| Name of their organisation | 52.6% | 10 |
| Name of equipment owner and telephone number | 47.4% | 9 |
| Person responsible for the operation of the equipment | 47.4% | 9 |
| Region | 42.1% | 8 |
| Local authority area | 42.1% | 8 |
| Owner's address | 42.1% | 8 |
| Operator's address | 42.1% | 8 |
| Operator's employer | 36.8% | 7 |
| County | 36.8% | 7 |
| Constituency | 31.6% | 6 |
| Answered question | | 19 |

Q14. How frequently would/do you want data? Select one option.

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| More than once - at regular intervals (e.g. annually, 6 monthly) | 48.3% | 29 |
| More than once but not at regular intervals | 26.7% | 16 |
| Other e.g. ad hoc (please specify) | 13.3% | 8 |
| One off occurrence | 11.7% | 7 |
| Answered question | | 60 |

Q15. In what format would the data be most useful to your organisation? Select one option.

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Excel | 65% | 39 |
| CSV | 26.7% | 16 |
| Other (please specify) | 8.3% | 5 |
| Answered question | | 60 |

Q16. Have you previously ordered Bulk Access Data? Select one option.

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Yes | 91.7% | 22 |
| No | 8.3% | 2 |
| Answered question | | 24 |

Q17. If you have ordered data previously, did it enable you to meet your purposes? Select one option.

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Yes | 66.7% | 14 |
| No | 33.3% | 7 |
| Answered question | | 21 |

Q18. How many times have you ordered each size of data pack? Please input amount.

Of the completed responses:

Three respondents ordered 3 small data packs on 1 occasion;

Six respondents ordered 2 medium data packs on 2 occasions; and

Fifteen respondents ordered 13 large data packs on 3 or more occasions.

Q19. What is the largest number of records for which you obtained data? Please input amount.

There were 18 responses to this question. The total number of records (data relating to a single address) reported as obtained was 622,881 and the range of responses varied between 1 at the lowest and 122,000 at the highest.

| No. of Records Obtained | Number of Respondents |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1-1000 | 1 |
| 1001 -10,000 | 3 |
| 10,001 – 50,000 | 10 |
| 50,001 – 100,000 | 3 |
| More than 100,000 | 1 |
| Total | 18 |

Q20. What, if any, subsequent assistance was necessary to help you make use of the data?

There were 11 responses to this question:

| Responses |
|--|
| None - problem was getting data.. ... in first place |
| Matching addresses to UPRNs (Universal Property Reference Numbers) |
| Would like assistance in identifying the source of errors in the data and assistance in fixing these problems if possible |
| None - however we did spend a long time identifying anomalous records (e.g. where the Energy Performance Certificate was not completed properly) |
| Had to use a consultant to find key attributes of the data |
| Filtered to allow in put into our database |
| Was entered into our GIS system |
| lorem ipsum* |
| None - but I have spent quite some time optimising the data & address matching |
| Significant amount of data cleansing required.... Support from GIS team required to match data records against property UPRNs |
| Needed data for specific addresses so bespoke routines needed to be developed |

*some respondents, completed sections of the questionnaire using the phrase Lorem ipsum indicating that the (meaningless) text has been provided because, although not relevant to them, completion of the question was a mandatory requirement of the form.

Q21. Did the cost of obtaining the data reflect its value to your organisation?

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Yes | 40% | 8 |
| No | 60% | 12 |
| | | 20 |

Q22. What, if any, restrictions would be appropriate regarding who may obtain bulk access data?

There were 11 responses to this question.

| |
|--|
| The outline restrictions in DCLG's publication "Making Energy Performance Certificate and data publicly available..." seem at this stage to be sensible. |
| Data should only be available to Councils |
| Private Companies |
| Existing restrictions are appropriate |
| You need to differentiate between organisations looking to sell services and those who have a regulatory, consultancy, or research role |
| Lorem Ipsum* |
| The current guidance is ok. |
| Current restrictions on bulk data availability set out in regulations and guidance are appropriate. |
| No ECO obliged party as they could use it to target residents. |
| Only public sector should be allowed access to guide improvement activity and perform research. |
| Public Bodies only |

*some respondents, completed sections of the questionnaire using the phrase Lorem ipsum indicating that the (meaningless) text has been provided because, although not relevant to them, completion of the question was a mandatory requirement of the form.

Q23. What, if any, restrictions would be appropriate regarding the uses to which the data may be used?

There were 11 responses to this question.

| |
|--|
| The outline restrictions in DCLG's publication "Making Energy Performance Certificate and data publicly available..." seem at this stage to be sensible. |
| Health warning on quality of data before it is used |
| None |
| The data we used is blended with lots of other data and hence too many restrictions from all the data sources make it really difficult to actually use the data. |
| lorem ipsum |
| In line with the Fair processing notice. |
| The current restrictions specified by the data provider are ok - and possibly too restrictive. |
| Current restrictions on bulk data use set out in regulations and guidance are appropriate. |
| LAs should be allowed to use data to approach individual households to promote measures as this is a justifiable use of their benefit |
| At the moment, licence states that data can be used for 5 years. This should be extended to 10 years to match lifetime of an Energy Performance Certificate. |
| No direct contact with householder on basis of data. |

Q24. Bulk Access Data can be used to support added value chargeable services such as advising consumers on energy efficiency improvements. Does/would your organisation use Bulk Access Data to provide added value chargeable services?

| Answer | Response in percentage | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Yes | 14.8% | 8 |
| No | 77.8% | 42 |
| Would rather not say | 7.4% | 4 |
| Answered question | | 54 |

Q25. If you have previously decided not to pursue a request for bulk access data, what made you decide against it? Select all that apply. (Note: Bulk Access Data Packages come in small, medium and large sizes costing 1p, 5p and 10p per Energy Performance Certificate record respectively)

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Cost | 48.9% | 24 |
| Other | 18.4% | 9 |
| Not an authorised recipient | 16.3% | 8 |
| End User Licence Agreement | 8.2% | 4 |
| Purposes not permitted | 8.2% | 4 |
| Answered question | | 49 |

Q26. Please provide any further comments you would like to make to inform our understanding of your data needs.

We received one comment which related to data being considered for use in identification of future energy markets.

Q27. Please indicate whether you would be content to be contacted for further information about your responses to this survey and Energy Performance Certificate data issues in general

| Answer | Percentage response | Number of responses |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Yes | 83.9% | 47 |
| No | 16.1% | 9 |
| Answered question | | 56 |

Conclusion

This was a customer engagement exercise and not a public consultation intended to determine policy direction. It was a survey of user satisfaction with the existing bulk access data service to help us determine how that service may be improved and whether there are any broad lessons to be learned.

The Department for Communities and Local Government appreciates the considered responses to the survey; these have helped better inform our understanding of users' views of the bulk access data service.

It is of great concern that a third of users (33.3%) were unable to use the data for the purposes they initially intended. We will consider what we can do to better inform customers of the nature of the data prior to their incurring costs obtaining it.

A matter to which we will give further consideration is the 60% response of those responding to Question 21 who did not consider the cost of obtaining the data to represent value to their organisation. We are reviewing the costs involved in obtaining data and as part of the process will consider how we can make as much of it as possible available through routes such as Open Data.

During the last year, we have added the publication of quarterly energy performance of buildings statistics [<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/energy-performance-of-buildings-certificates>] to the existing bulk data service for energy performance of buildings data and the online access to individual Energy Performance Certificate [<http://www.epcregister.com/>]. The Energy Performance Certificate statistics and online services are both free to users. We continue to listen, through mechanisms such as this survey, to the needs of users and will look to ways in which we can improve access to Energy Performance of Buildings data further.

Acknowledgements

The Department for Communities and Local Government would like to thank all those who took the time to respond to this survey, in particular, to those that contacted us subsequently to elaborate on issues raised by the survey and to offer their support by, for example, suggesting additional improvements that could be made the Energy Performance of Buildings bulk access data service.

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this report are those of respondents to the survey and are not necessarily shared by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Nor do they represent Government policy.