Questions from Industry Update Webinar 2026

Many thanks for all your questions, here are the questions that were asked and the answers to the best of our knowledge.

1. Warm Homes - will an EPC be sufficient, or will it need to be assessed by a retrofit assessor?
    a. Warm homes Plan funding would follow the PAS 2030 and 2035 process, meaning that a retrofit assessment would be required

2. Warm homes - do you have to have an EPC lower than Band D as with ECO, or has this been waived?
    a. Simon Flint answered this question, we don't have this level of detail yet, we are awaiting more information about how this will be implemented.

3. I did the Retrofit Assessor Course when it first came out but there was no work coming through at that time. Does my qualification still count, or do I need to repeat the course again?

    Yes, your Retrofit Assessor competence training is still valid and we would encourage you to join our scheme. I would suggest you complete some relevant CPD to ensure your knowledge of the process is brought up to date. In addition PAS 2035 was updated last year and I would suggest you consider completing out Level 3 Older & Traditional Buildings qualification which is now required if you are assessing any traditional buildings.

4. Will every project on the new Warm home scheme still need a RFA?
    a. As far as we are aware, yes, although we are still awaiting further announcements which are expected in Spring. It is worth noting that BUG which has been included in Warm Homes Plan has never needed a Retrofit Assessment.

5. Re social housing MEES: Fast forward to 2039, where fabric performance is already met. Are landlords expected to install either solar PV (smart readiness) or ASHP (heating system) on all their stock? What's the implications on flats where solar is not feasible? ASHP installs are highly expensive.
    a. Here are some words from the consultation regarding heating, it suggests storage heating would be of benefit:

    The band boundary for a C rating should be set such that it does not incentivise fossil fuel heating systems – no home that relies on fossil

fuel space or water heating should be able to achieve a C.

Among bands below C, the most efficient, relatively low-carbon fossil fuel systems should still be recognised over less efficient alternatives - More efficient fossil fuel systems should score better than higher-carbon inefficient fossil fuel systems

Systems with high efficiency and low carbon emissions, such as electric heat pumps and low-carbon heat networks, would always score a C and above
Direct electric heating with no (or insufficient) thermal energy storage will always score a D or below.

Cooking will be factored into metric – seeking ways to encourage electric cooking systems – retain highest A or B for electric cooking options contribution of cooking to the heating system metric is important but significantly smaller than the contribution of space heating and hot water.

6. Do you think the new methodology will make it more difficult or easier to achieve a C rating?
   a. Without a wrapper to calculate this is difficult to comment on, the current EPC looks at the dwelling as a whole, HEM will break it down into sections and will favour non fossil fuels like electricity. We would like to hope that properties with loft and wall insulation would meet the C, but if there is a gas boiler then this would not meet a C under heating, but there may be other ways to achieve a C under Smart readiness, like a solar panel etc.

7. How can private landlords tell a tenant they can't meet the MEES C, therefore, cannot legally rent the property - so the tenant has to leave?
   a. See answer to question 8.

8. After 2030, if an EPC gets below a C, how long does the landlord have to put the improvements in place?
   a. This was raised as part of the responses to the MEES consultation that there should be some grace period for when a new EPC is done during a tenancy, but there is no mention of this in the final response. So currently there is no grace period. But I would imagine local authority will discreetly allow reasonable time before enforcing any fines (i.e. if the Landlord is waiting for a contractor to carry out the works). Also potentially allowing tenants to stay in situ.

9. Where do you apply for an exemption?

a. As far as we are aware it will be the same place as it has always been, but this may merge into the new PRS register. The current place to register an exemption is here: https://prsregister.beis.gov.uk/NdsBeisUi/used-service-before

10. Re PRS Exemptions Register - will current exemptions be invalid when the new changes come in 2030?

a. A great question. This has not been stated anywhere, I think because there is a new standard coming in for 2030 and EPCs are allowed to run for 10 years from before that, we would think they would be allowed to run their course.

11. Re Cost Cap - if a remodel shows the property will not achieve Band C within £10k, even after completing all recommendations on an EPC - does the landlord still need to complete these steps?

a. Yes – they would need to complete as much as they can up to the £10k then register a 'Cost cap' exemption.

12. Do landlords have to SPEND £10,000 before exemption or can they have quotes to exceed £10,000 before the exemption is granted?

a. See options below. If they have spent up to £10k and still can't meet the requirement it would be a cost cap exemption, if the quotes for making even the cheapest improvement exceed the 10k then they could register the 'High Cost' Exemption

Confirmation of types:
'**Cost cap' exemption**: The cost cap exemption could be registered when a landlord has spent up to or over the cost cap of £10,000, or the next cheapest improvement will take the total spent on improvements, that have not previously been used for an exemption, over the cost cap of £10,000. The validity period for this exemption would be ten years.

'**All relevant improvements made' exemption:** No further recommendations on EPC or from an approved report showing no further improvements possible. The validity period for this exemption would be five years.

'High-cost' exemption: The high-cost exemption applies

where the cost of making even the cheapest recommended improvement on the EPC would exceed the cost cap (inc. VAT), will be retained. The validity period for this exemption would be five years.

13. For 3rd Party Consent exemption - am I right in thinking that a landlord could just get their tenant to sign an exemption saying they don't want the upgrades? Plenty of properties in my area that are not suitable for wall insulation (high exposure), or heat pumps etc so I struggle to see how landlords here could all comply.

a. Under the Consent exemption, a tenant is permitted to refuse access for improvement works. This exemption only applies for the duration of that specific tenancy. Once the tenant moves out, the exemption ends and the landlord is then required to carry out any necessary works. But if there were other reasons why they couldn't have improvements (solid wall etc) then they can apply under that exemption.

14. Who will police that?

a. If you are referring to exemptions, previously this has been policed by Local Authority, moving forwards with the PRS register for Landlords there is no reason to believe this will change.

15. There are a lot of properties that have TPO's (tree preservation order) in place, and can not get solar panels. will this then be an option for an exemption?

a. Solar panels are just one part of smart readiness, the property may have batteries, bidirectional meters or heat storage in the dwelling which may all help. The landlords could always choose to focus on heating instead. I would not say a TPO is on its own a reason to apply for an EPC exemption requirement.

16. Who will be able to apply / register the exemptions? Will DEA's be able to do this on behalf of landlords / social housing companies?

a. Currently you can do this already, but only really as an admin task. Where an assessor wants to give advice about MEES and its exemptions they must have Enhanced Insurance in place as a DEAs standard insurance will not cover them.

17. When will HEM calculated be available within Elmhurst to allow this type of future proofing

a. This is a good question, the HEM engine is available with a mock up of the future homes standard (FHS) wrapper, but because the existing dwellings

wrapper is still out for consultation about how it will operate, we can't state any dates. You are all welcome to look at this mock up, it has been released to New build assessors and may not be applicable to existing. Only for accredited Energy Assessors - Link to the mock up for FHS wrapper - Signin
Username: ees-assessor
Password: r3J6ZQ7?9t0~

18. Will air tightness test be necessary or put in place for new method?

a. The Existing Dwellings wrapper for HEM is still under consultation, so we do not know yet what will be mandatory and what is not, but it is suggested that air tightness will not be mandatory but optional under the wrapper.

19. Do we know what constitutes Smart Readiness? Is it just Smart App heating and Smart meters?

a. Answered in response to Q20.

20. To meet the smart readiness C grade, would a property require a form of renewables, i.e solar PV, solar heating, battery storage etc? Or will the presence of smart meters simply suffice?

a. A smart readiness metric could evaluate a building's capability to optimize energy usage and reduce demand during peak periods through smart technologies like meters, appliances, storage systems, and time-of-use pricing. The consultation states this:

Smart readiness - Micro-generation such as solar, alongside a smart meter, would be sufficient to achieve a C rating. We are considering what would be an appropriately-sized solar array (or equivalent) to achieve a C. Alternatively, we could require some level of energy storage alongside microgeneration in order to achieve a C rating, to recognise flexibility and bill savings.

21. Will static caravans need an EPC?

a. Under the EPBD regulations only permanent buildings require EPCs, so any moveable structure would not fall under the requirement.

22. Will HMOs be commercial or domestic EPC?

a. There is a grey area here, but as a rule of thumb, if the building was originally a domestic house and could easily be turned back to a house it

would need to have a domestic EPC. Purpose built HMOs would fall under the Commercial EPC (e.g. University campus buildings etc).

23. Is HEM the change that we're expecting for the 'reformed' EPC in 2030?

a. HEM is the engine with a wrapper that we will be using to collect the information, the EPC format is part of the EPC reform. But yes they will need to work hand in hand so both will be released at the same time.

24. Will the existing conventions be scrapped when HEM is introduced?

a. Potentially, although there may be a lot we can recycle for use under HEM. As Jason points out, they are still waiting for the ones for the FHS wrapper. I think where the RdSAP Methodology has restricted options for certain situations then they would not be applicable for HEM.

25. Do we have any indication of the data collection required? Will it be very different to what we do now or just using different software with a few additions?

a. We will still be entering all the characteristics of a dwelling, walls, insulation, heating, solar etc. So yes it will be different software with additions.

26. Is it assumed that we will need to be on-site a lot longer?

a. With HEM there is the possibility that we will be able to use technologies like laser-based scanning that measures building shapes and dimensions, it could be that we can auto-calculate floor areas, roof shapes, window locations, etc. We may even save time on this part. But it may be other parts of the survey may take longer depending on the level of detail that is available.

27. Will there be an overall rating on the new EPC? Each metric having its own rating, which is the relevant one for MEES/Exemptions?

a. No there will not be an overall rating, they will all be split. You would have to register a MEES exemption if you cannot get the fabric to C or one of smart readiness or heating. So for example you get a D Fabric, a D for smart readiness and a C for heating, you would need to register an exemption because you haven’t met the C on fabric. There will be an overall cost section, which will potentially show ££ and whether the cost to run the dwelling is low, average or high. (This is still being consulted on though).

28. How will the transition between existing EPC software and the new HEM system work with WH:SHF funding? For example, we will be carrying out surveys in the next couple of months under current RdSAP methodollogy which in theory will show properties suitable for funding i.e. Below and EPC C, but by the time we come to carry out the works in January next year the methodology will have changed to HEM and potentially the EPC rating? Will their be a transition period?

a. Yes we would imagine a transition period where both methodologies would be acceptable (for Energy reports), this would allow for both pre and post assessments to be completed in the same version of the methodology. (Different for any EPC lodgements, these can only be produced under the current methodology at the time).

29. Unsure if/when ASHP planning will change from 3metres?

a. We believe from May 2025 you can install heat pumps right up to your boundary line.

30. Did you say that the residents personal choice of electricity tariff and export and self-consumption of solar choices will impact the properties score?

a. Yes, on the smart readiness score.

31. Please could you breakdown the transition period? How can the old RdSAP10 and new HEM system be issued in parallel between Oct 26-Oct 29 (assuming Oct26 target is met which is unlikely)?

a. As far as we are aware there will be no transitional period (like in SAP), but we would expect at least 6 months' notice of any change, once we have the change date we will move over to using the HEM wrapper, as previously said this will need to work hand in hand with the new EPC format.

32. I did an EPC recently and the tenant had a big hole in the back door. It received a C as there was no way of inputting that in the system. Would that change in the new software?

a. We cannot answer that I'm afraid until we see the new EPC wrapper.

33. Does a landlord need to meet just one metric at C or above or Cs for all three Heating C, Smart C and Fabric C ?

a. They must meet C for fabric, then EITHER Smart or Heating.

34. If the new HEM software comes in this year, then the LL only really have a few months to get the existing EPC rating in place to be valid for 10years on existing system?

a. Although the Government have released this as a date it is unlikely all the stakeholders would be ready for this. But it might be that under HEM the property would also achieve a C.

35. Would a battery alone count as a C?

a. These are all the points they are consulting on in the HEM Wrapper for Existing Dwellings, potentially it could under smart readiness, but these are the points they are debating, they are discussing what size of battery it might need to be.

36. Are they thinking of changing for personal homes?

a. They are looking at this in Scotland, but nothing has been mentioned for England and Wales and NI.

37. Will the C rating be required for non domestic by 2030?

a. We don't know about Non Domestic yet, there has been no announcement.