

What is the Home Quality Mark?

The “Home Quality Mark” is the newest environmental assessment method for housing stock. It was announced by BRE at Ecobuild in March 2015 and looks to put consumers at the heart of house building. It aims to give confidence to home buyers and renters, as well as helping house builders differentiate themselves in the market. It is a fully voluntary assessment method, and rates buildings through the following metrics:

- Overall running costs
- Impact on the occupant’s health and wellbeing
- Environmental footprint
- Resilience to flooding and overheating
- Digital connectivity and performance of the home

Key points



SRL’s View: It is important for consumers and house builders that a robust, environmental assessment method is available for new build homes. As the scheme is so new, it is likely that further revisions to the initial Home Quality Mark standard will be required, to make sure it’s a good fit for future UK homes. It is likely to have many similarities to the BREEAM standards, which may require further refinement to help them fit the domestic market.

How will it compare to Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM?

The assessment of homes will be split into three sections, with a guide to be released shortly:

- ‘Knowledge Sharing’
- ‘Our Surroundings’
- ‘My Home’

‘Knowledge Sharing’

For those of you familiar to BREEAM, we expect the credits under this section to align to various BREEAM credits in the “Management” and “Waste” sections. There will be an emphasis on the following:

- Training site operatives – we expect the training here to be somewhat similar to the current “Site Sustainability Champion” training run by BRE;
- Efficient building, with low waste and energy use during construction;
- Commissioning managers and seasonal commissioning
- Training and building users guides to make sure occupants understand how their home operates and what maintenance will be required
- Monitoring energy and water use post construction.

‘Our Surroundings’

Similarly, we expect this section to be somewhat similar to various BREEAM credits from the “Transport” and “Land Use and Ecology” sections. It is also likely to incorporate some aspects of the “Ecology” section of Code for Sustainable Homes. Its likely emphasis will be put on:

- Provision of transport, and access to amenities and services such as high speed internet
- Site suitability – in terms of flood risk, noise impact, contamination, security and infrastructure and the potential to minimise these
- Building footprint – efficient use of space, as per ECO 5 in Code for Sustainable Homes.
- Increasing the ecological value of the site.

‘My Home’

This section is intended to promote healthy spaces which are cost effective to run. We expect credits here to be similar to those used in BREEAM’s “Health and Wellbeing” and “Energy” sections. Topics which are likely to form the backbone of this section include:

- Air Quality, ventilation and thermal comfort
- Energy efficiency and thermal comfort
- Energy efficient lighting and daylighting
- Acoustics
- Materials – in terms of Green Guide ratings, durability and responsible sourcing
- Water efficiency.

To discuss these changes in more detail please contact Cat Clarkson on 01787 247 595