

THE ENERGY CO₂UNTER™

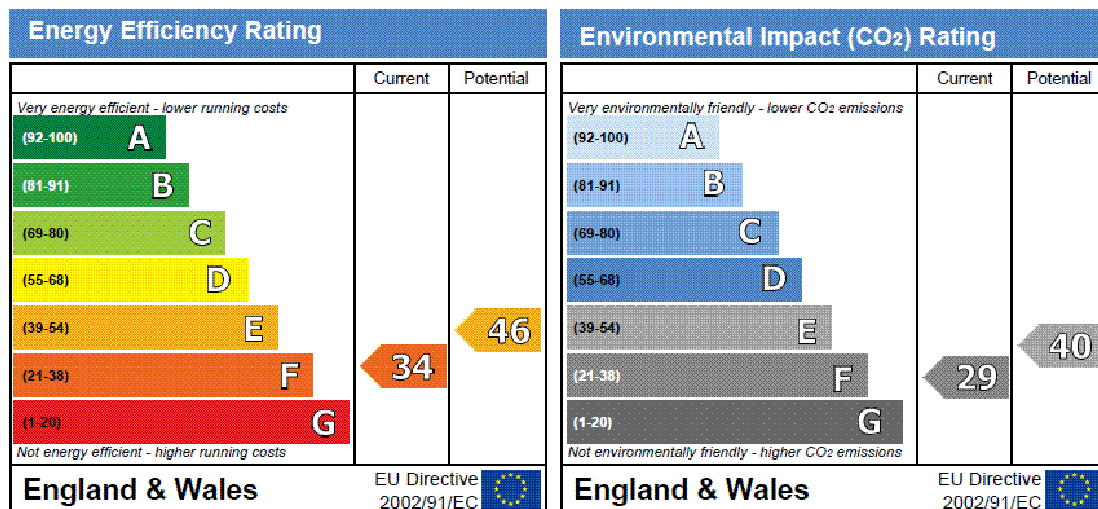
FACT SHEET: ENERGY PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATES (EPCs)

EPC Ratings

An EPC is a document that displays, in a Government approved standard format, the predicted energy efficiency (based on fuel costs) and environmental impact (based on carbon dioxide emissions) from heating and lighting your property.

The EPC is produced following an energy assessment undertaken by a qualified assessor, accredited to a scheme authorised by the Government. The assessment follows the Reduced Data Standard Assessment Procedure (RdSAP), and takes into account factors such as insulation, heating and hot water systems, ventilation and fuels used.

The ratings are expressed on a scale of 1 to 100. The higher the energy efficiency rating the more energy efficient the home and the lower the fuel bills are likely to be. A higher environmental impact rating indicates a more environmentally friendly property. The current average energy efficiency rating for a dwelling in England and Wales is band E; a new dwelling built to the latest building regulations might be expected to achieve band B.



The relationship between the energy efficiency rating and the environmental impact rating varies depending on which fuels are being consumed in the property because different fuels give off different quantities of carbon dioxide.

The Inspection

The assessor will carry out a visual inspection of the property's exterior and interior, including all rooms, extensions, loft area, garages and cupboards containing heating system components or gas and electricity meters. The assessor will assess the property's age, construction, insulation, glazing, heating systems, lighting and specific energy-efficient installations. Heating, hot water and lighting systems will be assumed to be working correctly. The assessor will take measurements, photographs and record site notes.

When a factor cannot be accurately determined from inspection, the assessor will make appropriate assumptions and may rely on written documentary evidence, such as receipts and guarantees, but the assessor is not permitted to accept hearsay evidence not backed up with some form of written proof.

Property Access

Where health and safety considerations restrict the inspection, particularly in areas such as cellars and roof spaces where the size and location of access hatches may render such areas unsafe, appropriate assumptions are made based on the property’s age, construction and type.

Predicted Costs

The EPC records predicted costs for the property’s heating, hot water and lighting. Costs of energy for other purposes are ignored. The predicted costs are based on standardised assumptions about occupancy and heating patterns, which may be different from the way you use your home. This is because the actual energy use of different occupants in similar dwellings can vary dramatically. The 'standard occupancy' assumptions enable a prospective purchaser or tenant to use the EPC for an objective comparison between one dwelling and another.

Summary of Elements

The EPC contains a summary of assessments of the key individual elements that have an impact on the property’s performance rating. Each element is assessed against a scale from ‘Very poor’ to ‘Very good’. The descriptions are not chosen by the assessor, but are generated automatically in accordance with the RdSAP methodology.

Elements	Description	Current performance	
		Energy Efficiency	Environmental
Walls	Solid brick, as built, no insulation (assumed)	Very poor	Very poor
Roof	Pitched, 50 mm loft insulation	Poor	Poor
Floor	Suspended, no insulation (assumed)	-	-
Windows	Partial double glazing	Poor	Poor
Main heating	Boiler and radiators, mains gas	Average	Good
Main heating controls	Programmer and room thermostat	Poor	Poor
Secondary heating	Room heaters, mains gas	-	-
Hot water	From main system	Average	Good
Lighting	No low energy lighting	Very poor	Very poor
Current energy efficiency rating		F 34	
Current environmental impact (CO₂) rating		F 29	

The descriptions are set against a high standard of energy performance with ‘Good’ or ‘Very Good’ difficult to achieve without low or zero carbon technologies. For example, a well controlled conventional heating system with a programmer, room thermostat and thermostatic radiator valves will only generate a description of ‘Average’.

Recommendations

The EPC may include recommended energy saving measures. The recommendations are not chosen by the assessor, but are generated automatically in standard text in accordance with the RdSAP methodology. They will be included only if the software predicts that they will be worthwhile and make a significant improvement to the energy efficiency rating of the dwelling.

Occupiers must take appropriate professional advice from reputable contractors before proceeding with the recommended measures and must understand that there is no guarantee that the predicted savings recorded in the EPC will be achieved. Much will depend on the individual circumstances and energy use of the household.