

Elmhurst Energy Accreditation EPBR Scheme Annual Report 2023 for England, Wales and Northern Ireland

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# **Foreword**

Welcome to the Elmhurst Energy annual report on its EPBR activities for England, Wales and Northern Ireland in 2023.

2023 has been a mixed year for the energy assessment industry, the market for existing dwellings EPCs has slowly reduced over the year, new build has dropped more significantly, whilst non-domestic buildings saw a year of two halves with continued rapid growth followed by a tail off in the back end of the year.

2023 was a difficult year for the overall economy, with higher interest rates, high inflation, compounded with high fuel prices affecting all homes and businesses. Within our industry sector it was also a year of waiting for important consultations such as the Future Homes & Building Standards and Home Energy Model, and the EPC Action Plan.

The development of the long overdue RdSAP10 is now well underway and will be delivered in Spring 2024, which is great news for Domestic Energy Assessors; with improved methodology comes new updated prices, carbon emissions, recognition of new technologies and a reset of recommendations. The assessments will take longer as there are more inputs, and we at Elmhurst recognise the vital importance that EPCs

play and thereby the value proposition our members give; we for one will continue to let industry stakeholders know.

This was also a milestone year as Elmhurst and Stroma Certification merged, this was on a strand by strand basis and has now concluded successfully. We are now one scheme, and with more resilience and strength in depth, we want to continue show leadership in our vital sector for all our members and for wider stakeholders.

COP28 in Nov/Dec 2023 in Dubai again also showed what a difficult global arena we operate in, but this year the members agreed to acknowledge the transition away from fossil fuels. A thread that will then no doubt be moved through various consultations, across all the devolved regions, for various different Government legislation and policies.

There continues to be lots of talk of revamping the EPC, measuring the real-time actual energy performance of all buildings, and supporting consumers to use their heating systems efficiently and drive down energy consumption. All of

this is very much welcomed, and we know that our members will play a significant part in this moving forward. In fact the Future Homes Standard Consultation alludes to the significant role that measured energy performance will play to prove that homes and buildings designed to perform to certain standards do indeed do so.

ECO policy continues to use a whole home approach (ECO4), using PAS2035/30 to think about a multi-measure approach to energy efficiency retrofit, rather than a singular focus on individual measures. The various complicated funding routes make this market very "stop start", but certainly ECO4 did increased throughout the year. We are also seeing more talk of using PAS2038 which details good quality retrofit of Non-Domestic buildings, again this is something upon which to build upon. There is an update to the PAS2035 standard and work continues on a new Retrofit Assessment Standard, all of which aims to improve the quality of energy efficiency measures being added to homes and buildings.

Following a decade of no new Building Regulations and therefore no updates to the SAP methodology, 2023 saw SAP10 begin to be used for real for some new-build homes. Also, as stated earlier, we are now looking at Home Energy Model, the new name for SAP11. This will be introduced in 2025 with a more new building regulations. Development effort will start in 2024 ready for this important next step change.

The BRE, Government and all schemes are currently working on the next version of RdSAP based on SAP10. All of this is very welcome news to ensure that energy assessments are as up-to-date as possible for the end consumer.

#### Markets:

The demand for existing home EPCs showed a slight decline through 2023 due to market uncertainty and a backdrop of interest rate rises and uncertain economic times, whilst house price rises dampened towards the end of the year. The outlook for interest rates on mortgage products is giving more positivity back into the market.

The Prime Minister's announcement in the Autumn about delaying the next step change for MEES targets in England and Wales certainly didn't help landlords' confidence in any new uplift rules. This appears to have been a way to push back any decisions until after the general election, most likely taking place this year. The requirements for EPCs in this sector remained positive.

New build homes completions fell through the year and appear some way from the target size of the market that Government would like to see (300,000 new builds per annum), anecdotally this has been blamed on a variety of reasons, including for example; supply chain issues, lack of skilled people, Brexit etc. The complications of new Building Regulations and transitional impact that this had is also in the mix. The overall market however remains positive and targets from all political parties state that more new homes continue to be required.

Non-domestic energy assessment had an extraordinarily busy start to the year with members finding themselves extremely busy, this tailed off towards the end of the year; the change in methodologies and the impact of new carbon factors have dramatically changed the results of EPCs and also enforcement of MEES in this sector seems to be on the up. The Prime Minister's announcement in the Autumn on MEES confused the markets, however it has since been confirmed that non-domestic MEES targets remain.

Lenders continued to engage with our sector and this has driven more and more banks and building societies to understand EPCs and engage with our market. This is a very good initiative and one which will ensure that more and more professional bodies consider the impact of energy assessments; with this in mind

the ability to lend to consumers to improve their building's energy efficiency is starting to become mainstream.

Overall, 2023 was a positive year, and we are all delighted to see new methodologies being updated to ensure that the energy assessments undertaken by our members are as up to date as possible. The massive shift in fuel prices and fuel security has put our industry and front of a lot of Government thinking. This is extremely good news for our members. As we always say 'you can't manage what you don't measure' and this is why Energy Assessors play a vital part of our future. We hope that as a nation we now move to the next phase of encouraging good quality retrofit to all our buildings to use less energy in the first place.

I wish you all a healthy and prosperous 2024 and thank you for being members, customers and supporters of Elmhurst Energy.

**Stuart Fairlie C.Build E MCABE**Managing Director
Elmhurst Energy Systems Ltd



## **Elmhurst Energy Systems**

#### **About Us**

Established in 1993 and operating in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland we have grown to become the largest and most well-known independent organisation in the energy assessment industry renowned for our professionalism and ability to drive high standards through our software, training and accreditation.

We ensure that individuals looking to achieve energy assessment qualifications are trained to the highest standard. Once qualified and where applicable they are invited to join our expert accreditation scheme. An accredited Elmhurst Member enjoys many benefits including access to our industry leading software, expert technical support and of course a competitive pricing structure.

Ultimately, our role is to ensure that our members undertake accurate and reliable energy assessments of buildings and organisations across the UK. We are audited by the governments of England, Wales and Scotland for our energy assessor scheme and are proud of our consistently high quality feedback from audits.

#### **Our Vision**

To be the leading provider of software, training and accreditation to the building, property and energy efficiency and environmental sectors.

We will continue to drive the energy assessment industry forward through unrivalled customer support, innovative products and a wide range of complementary energy assessment services. We believe that as a business-to-business company we can only succeed through the success of our customers.

#### **Elmhurst Energy Values**



# Elmhurst Energy Accreditation Scheme - Review

#### Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the operations of the energy assessor accreditation scheme for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, operated by Elmhurst Energy Systems Ltd, and is a requirement of all accreditation schemes to report to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). This report also serves as a public record of the scheme's activities and may be read by our members, other stakeholders, and anyone else with an interest in energy assessment.

This report provides various data on the membership of the scheme and the number of report lodgements made by its members on existing and new build dwellings (DEA and OCDEA respectively), non-domestic buildings, the operational rating of public buildings (DEC), and air conditioning inspection reports. It is important to note that this report only covers England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

#### Membership

The table below outlines total membership in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, per strand on 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023. Elmhurst offer a number of different accreditation strands through either qualification or APEL routes.

#### Table 1a:

Strand	Total Membership
DEA	7636
OCDEA	1653
NDEA L3	1270
NDEA L4	1015
NDEA L5	146
DEC	409
ACEA	52
TOTAL	12181

#### Lodgements

Between January and December 2023 Elmhurst has lodged a total of Energy Certificates across all strands. The table below outlines total lodgments for this period.

Table 2:

Strand	Total Lodgements
DEA	919,496
OCDEA	20,494
NDEA	93,656
DEC	18,287
ACEA	546

#### **Auditing**

Elmhurst audits a minimum of 2% of lodged certificates per annum per strand\*, consisting of random and smart audits, with individual assessors each subject to a minimum number of audit checks, as required by the Scheme Operating Requirements. Additional auditing is also undertaken for new assessors, complaints, and follow-on audits.

Elmhurst checks the compliance levels by strand monthly, and monitors the overall compliance of the scheme on an on-going basis.

#### **Existing dwellings**

Table 3 details the total number of EPCs called for audit, during the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 for the Elmhurst DEA accreditation strand.

Table 3: England & Wales

Eligiana & Wales	
Number of epcs called for audit	18,170
% of epcs called for audit	2.01%

#### **Northern Ireland**

Number of epcs called for audit	610
% of epcs called for audit	3.79%



<sup>\*</sup>NDEA Level 5 audit requirements require 10% of members to be audited per annum

#### **Newly Constructed Dwellings**

Table 4 details the total number of EPCs audited, along with results, during the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 for the Elmhurst OCDEA accreditation strand.

#### Table 4:

Eng	land	<b>  &amp;  </b>	Na	les
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Number of epcs called for audit	4,352
% of epcs called for audit	2.00%

#### **Northern Ireland**

Number of epcs called for audit	132
% of epcs called for audit	2.58%

#### **Non-Domestic Buildings**

Table 5, below, details the total number of EPCs audited, along with results, during the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 for the Elmhurst NDEA accreditation strand.

Table 5:

#### England & Wales (Level 3 & 4)

Number of epcs called for audit	1,845
% of epcs called for audit	2.00%

#### England & Wales (Level 5)

Number of epcs called for audit	42
% of epcs called for audit	10.44%

#### Northern Ireland (Level 3 & 4)

Number of epcs called for audit	77
% of epcs called for audit	6.83%

#### Public Buildings (DECs)

Table 6, below, details the total number of DECs audited, along with results, during the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 for the Elmhurst DEC accreditation strand.

#### Table 6:

#### **England & Wales**

England & Wales	
Number of epcs called for audit	357
% of epcs called for audit	2.02%

#### **Northern Ireland**

Number of epcs audited	10
% of epcs audited	4.11%

#### **Air Conditioning**

Table 7, below, details the total number of ACIRs audited, along with results, during the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023 for the Elmhurst ACEA accreditation strand.

Table 7:

#### **England & Wales**

Lingiana & Wales	
Number of epcs audited	14
% of epcs audited	2.56%



#### **Continuous Improvement**

Elmhurst undertakes the following steps to support our Members and help improve the quality of their work, audit submissions and compliance of the scheme overall, including:

- Regular technical bulletins and a quarterly newsletter that helps our members to keep up to date with the latest conventions and industry news.
- Technical support from our Business units by email or phone
- Feedback to members after each audit including areas to improve even when audits are passed to promote good/best practice
- A comprehesive training programme incluing a number of advanced courses for experienced assessors.
- Active promotion of the Evidence Requirements guidance document
- to assessors who have failed an audit with corrective action where appropriate.
- Overview of assessor surveillance requirements to trainees at the end of all our training courses. This emphasises the importance of complying with mandatory audit requirements and encourges them to engage in good compliance practice.
- Active promotion of Elmhurst's Auditing zone which is available to all Elmhurst Members
  and enables assessors to review; their EPC evidence before it is submitted for audit, all
  pending audit requests including deadlines for submission, and their audit history to
  date.

#### **Customer Satisfaction**

Elmhurst received 456 complaints during the period 1st January 2023 to 31st December 2023, the vast majority of which were in respect to the perceived quality of RdSAP EPCs. The majority of these complaints related to the EPC outputs and the methodology, rather than the competency of the assessor. Each complaint was fully investigated by Elmhurst and appropriate corrective and preventive action taken.

Four members had their accreditation revoked as a result of breaches of our Code of Conduct during 2023.

Elmhurst use Net Promoter Score; an index ranging from -100 to +100 that measures the willingness of customers to recommend a company's products or services to others. In 2023 our average Net Promoter Score was 54, a score that is associated with some of the world's best companies.



### Core software releases

#### **DEA Technical Advice**

Within our RdSAP software suite, Elmhurst implemented a new section for Technical Advice. Within this area we provide additional advice and assistance to the DEA to ensure the accuracy of the EPC. This includes highlighting data combinations that are unusual, or additional requirements of evidence substantiation for quality assurance purposes.



#### **SAP10 Online**

Moving on from the core launch of the SAP10 regulatory requirements for New-build domestic dwellings, we have invested in features within this online application to help our customers navigate the software. A good example of this is our extensive mass processing suite, which enables updating data on many assessments at once to generating reports for a new build site.

#### **Notification Centre**

Delivered a new notification centre for our membership, through a main member login portal "Access Elmhurst". This has enabled Elmhurst to provide notifications to our membership via an alternative to the established models, such as email and social media.

#### **Condition Report Go (Android)**

Elmhurst already provides an online and mobile iOS version, of a software app to enable our members to collect home condition data on an existing dwelling. To ensure as many of our members could make use of the mobile Condition Report software, we also rolled out a new application for Android users via the Google Play Store.

## Who's who at Elmhurst



**Stephen O'Hara** Chairman

Stephen joined Elmhurst in 1997 as Training Manager and became a Director in 2000 with responsibility for technical development, including surveying systems and software. Stephen became Managing Director in 2004 and Chairman in 2016 but is still directly involved with technical development. Stephen strongly believes in the value of good training and support.



**Martyn Reed**Group Managing Director

Martyn worked within the certification and consultancy industry for over 30 years. He joined Elmhurst in 2013 as Operations Director, then subsequently Head of Operations and Commercial, before taking overall responsibility as Managing Director in April 2016. In 2021 he took on the role of Group MD.



**Stuart Fairlie**Managing Director

Stuart joined Elmhurst in 1999 and has held many positions in the Training and Development areas of the business, becoming Technical Director in April 2017 and then taking over as Managing Director in 2021.



**Andrew Parkin** 

Technical Development Director

Andrew joined Elmhurst in 2022 and has and has held many positions with the industry since qualifying as a DEA (with Elmhurst) in 2007. Andrew is the current chair of the Property Energy Professionals Association (PEPA) and has a passion for the energy efficiency of buildings. He is keen to find new, exciting products for Elmhurst Members and to help the wider industry understand how energy assessment and retrofit can benefit homeowners, occupants, and other key stakeholders.



**Lesley Asprey** Head of Accreditation

Lesley joined Elmhurst in 2007 as part of the training and accreditation department. Having gained a wealth of knowledge in our industry, Lesley now manages a team that administrates accreditation and certification provision for our EPBR and competent person schemes.



James Gill Head of IT

James joined Elmhurst's DEA support team in 2012, having previously been a DEA for a leading regional estate agent. He became a Business Analyst in 2014 and Business Analyst Manager in 2018. In 2021 he was appointed Head of IT.



**Josh Wakeling** Head of Training

With a background in commercial energy assessment, Josh brings plenty of understanding to the role of Head of Technical, where he manages the efficient and effective day-to-day delivery of operations, and knowledge based products and services.



**Sam Cantle**Head of Operations

Sam Joined Elmhurst from Stroma Certification, where he had worked as Technical Manager for over 10 years. An experienced Manager with a demonstrated history of working in the construction industry. Skilled in Negotiation, Customer Service, Sustainability, Renewable Energy, and Procurement.



Amarpal Sihra
Head of Commercial

Amo is a Chartered Building Engineer, with over 10 years' experience within the energy and buildings industry and a passion for reducing carbon emissions. As Head of Commercial for Elmhurst Energy, responsible for the sales and marketing teams, his solid technical experience and specialist knowledge has helped propel the company to the success it enjoys today with a reputation as a provider of high quality services within the industry.



Alistair Galloway
Business Development Manager (Scotland and NI)
Alistair joined Elmhurst in 2022 as the Scotland and Northern
Ireland Manager, having worked in business development for 15
years. As a former professional athlete, he brings that same



**Fiona Wilson**Business Development Manager (Existing Customers)

ambition into his professional life.

Fiona Wilson joined Elmhurst Energy in 2016, having joined the team from National Home Energy Rating (NHER), where she worked since 2007. Fiona is a well-known face in the energy efficiency industry, where her in-depth knowledge and technical specialism is indispensable to members.



Martin Firth
Business Development Manager (England and Wales)
Martin joined Elmhurst Energy in 2017 as Business Development
Manager for England and Wales. After leaving behind a
distinguished career in the British Armed Forces, Martin joined a
series of multinational companies and brings with him a wealth of
experience in the energy and renewables sectors.



#### **Contact Details**

Should you require any further clarification, please contact us at:

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