

Building regulations essay sample



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UK Building Regulations:

The first building control legislation in England dates back to the Great Fire of London in 1666. The reasons why it spread out so quickly were the proximity of the timber buildings. The government of the day realised this and introduced by-laws to try to prevent it from happening again. So in 1667 they introduced the London Building Act. However it was not until 1774 that the District Surveyors in London were appointed to enforce these laws.

Around this time due to the Industrial Revolution other towns were rapidly expanding and they started to experience similar problems that London had previously. In an attempt to try and rectify this Local Acts were put into place to gain some form of control over the buildings. This meant that the building standards varied greatly from one place to the next and legislation became confusing. Later, cholera epidemics and what were known as The Great Stinks of 1858-59 prompted the authorities to pay more heed to public health and sanitation.

Reforms were introduced to combat the four Ds - darkness, damp, dirt and disease. The by-laws were subsequently extended to rural areas and eventually became national laws. In 1936 a new concept of Building Legislation was developed. This produced a series of controls, regarding the construction and condition of buildings. At the same time a list of British Standards were introduced to indicate that the various aspects complied. Unfortunately these were not made mandatory and many Local Authorities stuck to their own standards. This was the first step towards the Building Regulations we have today. In 1961 the government removed the power of the Local Authorities to make building bye-laws. This meant that the Ministry

were now able to make National compulsory Building Regulations, the first of which was put into action in 1966. Now the UK Building Regulations are helping to produce superior buildings for generations to come. With new legislation like the Code for Sustainable Homes they are also helping to ensure that buildings are cleaner, greener and more energy efficient keeping fuel bills down and ensuring a high standard of living for everyone.

Building act

The Act was implemented as a result of The Great Fire of London. Today, The Building Act 1984 deals with all aspects relating to the built environment. It gives powers to inspectors to introduce new building regulations. The Building Regulations lay down health and safety standards for the construction of all types of building work, including new build, extensions, internal alterations, underpinning, cavity wall insulation and change of use.

Kyoto

The Kyoto Protocol was an agreement negotiated by many countries in December 1997 and came into force with Russia's ratification on February 16, 2005. The reason for the lengthy time span between the terms of agreement being settled upon and the protocol being finalized was due to terms of Kyoto requiring at least 55 parties to ratify the agreement and for the total of those parties' emissions to be at least 55% of global production of greenhouse gases. The protocol was developed under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Participating countries that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol have committed to cut emissions of not only carbon dioxide, but of also other greenhouse gases, being: * Methane (CH₄)

* Nitrous oxide (N₂O)

* Hydrofluorocarbons

If countries continue with emissions above the targets, then they are required to engage in emissions trading; i. e. buying “ credits” from other participant countries that are able to exceed their reduction targets. *

Overall average emissions target: 5. 4%

* UK target: 12. 5%

* Some eco-advanced countries have agreed to high emissions targets; e. g. Germany and Denmark 21% * Some less advanced countries are allowed to increase emissions: e. g. Greece +25%, Spain +15%, Ireland +13% * The large developing countries, especially China, India and Brazil, took part in the discussions but were not expected to have reduction targets.

Merit

The Building Act, consisting of 135 sections, was made law in England and Wales in 1984. Part A:| Structure| Stability is the vital factor here, also taking into account the need to withstand additional weight such as furniture, and the effects of strong winds.| Part B:| Fire| Fire escapes have to be safe, effective and available at all times, and lead to a safe place. Recent changes in how the fire-resistant qualities of materials are measured. Internal surfaces have to be able to resist the spread of flames, but if they do catch fire, they must restrict the rate at which heat is released.| Part C:

| Site Preparation & Resistance to Moisture| The ground to be built on must be free of vegetation and precautions must be taken to get rid of dangerous contaminants including radon, landfill gas and methane. If necessary the

subsoil must be drained and walls, floors and roofs must be reasonably moisture-proof. | Part D:| Toxic substances| Cavity walls have to be built in such a way that fumes from the insulating material cannot permeate into the building.| Part E:| Sound Insulation| This has been tightened up recently, so make sure you check thoroughly the new requirements. It applies to houses within the same building, and to flat conversions. It describes how to satisfy sound insulation requirements and gives examples of suitable construction methods.| Part F:| Ventilation| There are two requirements here. One concerns the provision of adequate ventilation in buildings.

The second is about preventing condensation in roofs and roof spaces.| Part G:| Hygiene| A bathroom or shower room with hot and cold water is essential in houses, and there must be an adequate number of sanitary conveniences for any building. They have to be separated from food preparation areas.| Part H:| Drainage and waste disposal| There has to be somewhere to store solid waste as well as adequate access for its removal. Foul and surface water drainage systems must be provided. Cesspools and septic tanks must have a reasonable capacity and be situated so that there is good access for emptying, and so that water supplies cannot be contaminated.| Part J:| Heat Producing Appliances| Fixed appliances which burn solid fuel, oil and gas, as well as incinerators, must have a good supply of air and the waste products must be discharged outside.

These appliances and their flues must be installed so that the building cannot catch fire. Part K: Stairs, ramps and guards| Stairs and ramps must provide safe passage and be guarded, with enough protection to stop people falling from floors and balconies, or through open windows or ventilators. In

workplaces, vehicle barriers have to be provided. Measures must be put in place to ensure people cannot be trapped or hit by doors. Part L:

Conservation of Fuel and Power

This section has seen significant changes recently as the Government has tried to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Ways of limiting heat loss through buildings, more efficient heating and hot water systems and installing artificial lighting systems are all involved here. It demonstrates the benefits of using solar heat and how to prevent heat loss from hot water pipes, ducts, etc. | Part M: | Access and Facilities for Disabled People | Again, there have been many changes to this section recently. Reasonable access has to be provided for disabled people in non-domestic buildings, including toilets and washing facilities. Part N: Glazing

This concerns safety and cleaning. Any glass which people are likely to come into contact with must break as safely as possible. Large panels of glass must be visible, and controls for opening windows, skylights and ventilators must be safely located.