



The Building Regulations Advisory Committee

Annual Report 2006



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Introduction by the Chairman and Deputy Chairman

We are pleased to present this latest report on the advisory work carried out by the Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC), which covers the calendar year of 2006.

The importance of the Building Regulations in helping to deliver safe, healthy, accessible and more recently, sustainable, buildings cannot be disputed and it is acknowledged that BRAC has played a key role in this process over the last 45 years.

As in the past, in 2006 BRAC continued to work closely with officials in the Department for Communities and Local Government's Sustainable Buildings Division to provide strategic and technical advice and views on a broad range of issues related to the Building Regulations, as detailed in this annual report. This included changes to various parts of the regulations, in particular the conclusion of the fundamental review of Part B (Fire Safety). BRAC played a key role in the latter through the work of its working party and significant improvements are due to come into force in April 2007.

The continuing increasing focus on sustainability and climate change issues relating to buildings, including energy and water conservation, was also a key consideration during 2006. This included the publication of the Code for Sustainable Homes and the review of the sustainability of the existing building stock, the latter of which was chosen as the topic for BRAC's 2006 Awayday discussions.

BRAC also gave its initial views on the Department's outline proposals to review the future of the Building Regulations. Looking ahead, it is clear that this exercise will be a fundamental part of BRAC's advisory work on the regulations in 2007 and the Committee looks forward to the challenge of assisting the Department to achieve its aim of modernising and strengthening the system.

We were very pleased that the Minister, Angela Smith MP, managed to find time in her busy diary to meet members informally in December and we hope that she is able to attend some future meetings of the Committee.

Finally, we would again like to acknowledge the hard work and breadth of collective knowledge and expertise of all the members of BRAC which enables the Committee to function so effectively, together with the unstinting support of officials within the Sustainable Buildings Division – particularly the BRAC Secretariat team. We are most grateful to them for their assistance.

January 2007

Michael Finn

Michael Finn was appointed Chairman of BRAC at the beginning of 2002 and has been reappointed twice. His current term concludes in December 2008. He first became a member in 1991.

He is a chartered surveyor, who was formally an equity partner in Drivers Jonas, Chartered Surveyors, and is now a Director of Fox Management and Consulting. He is also a past President of the Building Surveyors Division of the RICS, and is currently President of the Association of Consultant Building Surveyors. His experience in both the public and private sectors covers many areas of building construction and management involving both the existing building stock and new construction.



Alastair Soane

Alastair Soane was appointed Deputy Chairman of BRAC at the beginning of 2002 and has also been reappointed twice. His current term concludes in January 2009. He first became a member in 2001.

He is a structural engineer, who was formerly Chief Executive of Bingham Cotterell, consulting engineers. He is currently Director of CROSS (Confidential Reporting on Structural Safety) and visiting professor in the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Liverpool. He has wide experience of construction both nationally and internationally.



The role and operation of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC)

The Building Regulations

1. The work of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee (BRAC) is concerned with those regulations applicable in England and Wales. Comparable regulations apply in Northern Ireland and Scotland, which have their own advisory committees.
2. The powers to make Building Regulations are contained in the Building Act 1984. The 1984 Act provides that they may be made for the purpose of: securing the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings; for furthering the conservation of fuel and power; and for preventing waste, misuse or contamination of water. These purposes have been further extended by the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Act 2004 to provide powers to make regulations relating to furthering the protection or enhancement of the environment, facilitating sustainable development, and furthering the prevention or detection of crime.
3. The current Building Regulations 2000 (as amended) contain procedural requirements and a broad range of what are termed functional requirements with which building work must comply. The functional requirements are grouped under fourteen 'parts' (A, B, C, etc.), as indicated below and, in essence, they provide a baseline of minimum standards to assure the delivery of 'fit for purpose' new and refurbished buildings. The Building Regulations are supported by statutory Approved Documents which give detailed technical guidance on ways to comply with the parts/requirements of the regulations. Building control is carried out by local authorities and private sector approved inspectors.

PART

(as at 31 December 2007)

A	Structure
B	Fire safety
C	Site preparation and resistance to contaminants and moisture
D	Toxic substances
E	Resistance to the passage of sound
F	Ventilation
G	Hygiene
H	Drainage and waste disposal
J	Combustion appliances and fuel storage systems
K	Protection from falling, collision and impact
L	Conservation of fuel and power
M	Access to and use of buildings
N	Glazing – safety in relation to impact, opening and cleaning
P	Electrical safety

Terms of Reference

4. BRAC was originally established in April 1962 under Section 9 of the Public Health Act 1961, which has been superseded by Section 14 of the Building Act 1984. Its terms of reference contained in Section 14 are to advise the appropriate Secretary of State (currently the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government) on the exercise of his/her power to make Building Regulations and on other subjects concerned with Building Regulations in England and Wales. Section 14 also places a duty on the Secretary of State to consult BRAC before making any Building Regulations containing substantive requirements. In practice, the Committee is used as a sounding board on the whole range of Building Regulations issues and on other related matters. Consultation is usually carried out via officials of the Department for Communities and Local Government's (hereafter referred to as 'the Department') Sustainable Buildings Division (SBD) (see 'Secretariat' below).
5. BRAC is defined as an advisory non-departmental public body (NDPB) and is also designated as a Scientific Advisory Committee under the Government's Code of Practice for Scientific Advisory Committees 2001.

Membership

6. Appointments to BRAC are currently made jointly by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government and the Secretary of State for Wales in open competition, with full regard to the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice for Ministerial Appointments to Public Bodies. Terms of appointment are usually between one to three years, and there is no minimum or maximum level of membership.
7. Members are appointed on an independent basis to represent particular areas/fields of expertise and experience, relevant to the Building Regulations, rather than as delegates of particular organisations or interest groups. Three new members were appointed to BRAC in 2006 primarily to represent construction interests – full details of the membership during 2006 can be found on pages 19-20.
8. Members (including the Chairman and Deputy Chairman) are unpaid for their work both on the main BRAC Committee and associated working parties, but can claim travel and other expenses, and loss of earnings, as appropriate. Members are provided with a *Member's Handbook* (which was updated and reissued during 2006) containing guidance on membership and are expected to adhere to a code of conduct detailed therein, which includes procedures for declaring any conflicts of interest. A *Register of Member's Interests* is maintained by the BRAC Secretariat, which members are obliged to complete. The Member's Handbook and the register can be found on the BRAC area of the Department's website – see address in paragraph 10 (hereafter referred to as the BRAC webpages).

Secretariat

9. BRAC is sponsored by the Department and the Secretary of State is accountable to Parliament for the policies and performance of the Committee, and for the resources allocated to its operation. As BRAC covers England and Wales, Welsh Assembly Government officials liaise closely with the Department's officials and a representative attends Committee meetings as an Observer (representatives of the other devolved administrations in Scotland and Northern Ireland also attend as observers).
10. The Secretariat function is provided by officials from the Department's SBD, who attend BRAC meetings along with other SBD policy officials, as appropriate. The Head of Division, Anne Hemming, who tragically died in a cycling accident in August 2006, was succeeded by Mark Coulshed; they were the principal contacts with BRAC during 2006; whilst Kevin Flanagan and David Petherick were Secretary and Technical Secretary to the Committee respectively. Lynda Fletcher, Kathleen Morris and Clive Botterill comprised the remainder of the Secretariat team, who undertook these duties alongside others. The BRAC Secretariat can be contacted at:

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Zone 2/J5, Eland House
Bressenden Place
London SW1E 5DU

Tel: 020 7944 5742
Fax: 020 7944 5719
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Website: www.communities.gov.uk/brac

11. The main tasks of the Secretariat involve operating the procedures for the Ministerial appointment of members; making arrangements for meetings, including preparing and circulating agendas, papers and minutes; arranging for publication of documents in accordance with the BRAC publication scheme (see below); control of the budget; and co-ordinating production of annual reports and other BRAC publications.
12. The Secretariat has prepared a publication scheme, which BRAC and the Information Commissioner has approved, in accordance with Section 19 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000. This requires all public bodies to adopt and maintain a scheme for the publication and availability of information. The *BRAC Publication Scheme* was subject to amendments during 2006, and can be found on the BRAC webpages. BRAC agendas, papers, minutes and annual reports are also available on this site, in accordance with the publication scheme.

Budget

13. The total expenditure by the Committee during 2006 on hospitality, travel and other expenses, was approximately £12,800. In addition to this expenditure, SBD bears the cost of carrying out the Secretariat tasks referred to in paragraph 11 above.

BRAC's advice and activities during 2006

Introduction

14. As in previous years, BRAC provided advice during 2006 on all aspects of the Building Regulations and the supporting Approved Documents and on other related initiatives. BRAC's main advisory work was conducted in four main Committee meetings held at the Department's premises in February, May, July, and October. On time efficiency grounds, BRAC decided during the year – in consultation with the Department – to hold three main all day Committee meetings per year from 2007, instead of the previous five half day meetings. To assist with the transition four meetings were therefore held in 2006. As part of this new way of working, BRAC was also consulted in papers sent via email in between meetings and kept informed of various developments, as necessary.
15. In addition, BRAC held its annual Awayday in November and a 'Think Tank' meeting in December 2006. There were also two operational BRAC working parties in 2006, relating to Part B (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations and Sustainability. BRAC establishes working parties (WPs) when appropriate, to help formulate its advice on technical and other specialist matters related to the Building Regulations, working in close consultation with the Department's officials and with other co-opted experts from key stakeholders. The working parties are chaired by a BRAC member and meet as often as necessary, reporting back to the main Committee with their advice and recommendations.
16. The following paragraphs briefly report on BRAC's work during 2006. Further information can be found in the Committee's papers and minutes which, as stated above, are published on the BRAC webpages in accordance with the Committee's publication scheme.
 - paragraphs 17-32 – areas that BRAC considered throughout the year;
 - paragraphs 33-42 – other areas that BRAC considered during the year;
 - paragraph 43 – information papers and presentations that BRAC received;
 - paragraphs 44-51 – reports of the BRAC Awayday and the Committee's Think Tank meeting;
 - paragraphs 52-54 – reports on the work of BRRAG and BCPSAG, which have BRAC representation;
 - paragraph 55-56 – advises where publications that BRAC was involved in producing can be obtained.

Areas that BRAC considered throughout 2006

The Part B (Fire Safety) Working Party (WP) – Review of Part B and Procedural Guidance

17. During 2006 the BRAC Part B WP, chaired by David Gibson, continued its work advising on the fundamental review of Part B of the Building Regulations, which had begun in early 2004. The WP also considered revisions to the Fire Safety Procedural Guidance, which explains the steps involved in approving fire safety aspects of building work, and the interaction between Building Regulations and other statutory fire safety requirements in England and Wales.
18. The WP met six times in 2006 to consider and advise on the proposed changes to Part B and Approved Document B in the light of the 2005 consultation responses and further supporting evidence received. The WP Chairman reported to the main Committee at each of its four 2006 meetings. The principal fire safety issues considered by the WP and the main Committee included:
 - domestic loft conversions;
 - the use of door-closing devices in dwellings;
 - standby power for smoke alarms;
 - the provision of sprinklers in tall blocks of flats;
 - maximum unsprinklered compartment size for single storey warehouses;
 - new guidance on residential care homes (including on the use of sprinklers);
 - revised guidance on measures to assist firefighting in tall buildings;
 - a new regulation to ensure that the person responsible for preparing a building's risk assessment under the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 is made aware of the building's fire protection measures;
 - splitting of Approved Document B into two parts: Volume 1 – Dwellinghouses and Volume 2 – Buildings other than Dwellinghouses.
19. The revised Part B and Approved Document B, implementing changes related to the above issues, together with the accompanying Regulatory Impact Assessment, were published on 18 December 2006 and are due to come into force on 6 April 2007.
20. The third edition of the Fire Safety Procedural Guidance was published on 27 September 2006 to take account of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005. Further revisions will be needed to take account of the new regulation on the provision of fire safety information and it is intended that the fourth edition will be published in the summer of 2007.

The Future of the Building Regulations

21. Throughout the year BRAC's advice was sought by the Department as it gave consideration to outline proposals to review the future of the Building Regulations and associated guidance, with a view to improving the system. The Committee had previously given detailed consideration to this issue at its 2004 Awayday.
22. BRAC gave its support to the review and discussed the wider adoption of a programme management approach to projects revising the Building Regulations. The Committee also contributed to the developing plan for the review, established to examine a range of fundamental issues regarding the regulations' coverage and complexity, comprehension and compliance, and specifics such as the process of updating and revision. Issues raised by BRAC included:
 - concerns that, if a fixed 'baseline' year with a five yearly updating cycle was proposed for parts of the Building Regulations, there would need to be flexibility to allow for urgent updates;
 - under the theme of compliance and enforcement, the issue of skills shortage and education requirements, and the benefits of clear definitions and consistent language were highlighted;
 - the need for an evidence base for change and how this might be confirmed and expanded by, for example, appropriate research;
 - the need for clarity in the way measures such as the Code for Sustainable Homes provided the direction for the future of Building Regulations and standards.
23. On 27 June 2006, the Department hosted a Ministerial 'Roundtable' meeting to discuss the Building Regulations and the developing plan for the review of the regulations, with key construction industry representatives. The meeting was chaired by Angela Smith MP, Minister with responsibilities including the Building Regulations. The attendees included the BRAC Chairman and three other Committee members. A note of the meeting is available on the Department's website:
www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1503007
24. BRAC was also informed of an online discussion forum on 'Achieving Building Standards' which was launched by Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) on the Department's website in late 2006. This was part of a study by SAIC on behalf of the Department to provide an insight into how the building control system is perceived by many stakeholders; how successfully building standards are being achieved; and the barriers to improvement.
25. The Department proposed to issue a statement on the future of the Building Regulations/Building Control in early 2007 and publish a full consultation paper later in the year. BRAC will continue to be fully consulted on the proposals.

The Code for Sustainable Homes and the Sustainability Working Party (WP)

26. The Code for Sustainable Homes was also a major topic of consideration for BRAC during 2006. The Code provides a single national standard to guide industry in the design and construction of sustainable homes. Minimum standards have been set above the requirements of the Building Regulations and it is intended that the Code will signal the future direction of the regulations in relation to sustainability issues.
27. Towards the end of 2005 BRAC had provided substantive comments on the draft Code, which was subject to public consultation from 5 December 2005 to 6 March 2006. The process of consultation with BRAC continued in 2006 with a wide ranging discussion at the Committee's February meeting based on issues that had been identified by Lynne Sullivan, Chair of BRAC's Sustainability WP.
28. Following the closure of the Code consultation, BRAC undertook detailed consideration at its July meeting of the following specific issues and Ministers were appraised of the Committee's views:
 - energy efficiency methodology;
 - energy efficiency levels;
 - water efficiency levels;
 - other issues: Code design; planning issues, lifetime homes, security; and good design/space standards.
29. The Code was also discussed at a further meeting of BRAC's Sustainability WP (established in early 2005) in November 2006, which also considered the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (see paragraph 42), proposals for water efficiency regulations (paragraphs 33-34), and the review of existing buildings (paragraphs 31-32).
30. The Code was finalised and launched by the Department on 13 December 2006, along with the consultation documents: 'Building a greener future: Towards Zero Carbon Development' and 'Planning Policy Statement on Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1'. BRAC will continue to be consulted on developments on the Code and other sustainability issues.

Review of the sustainability of the existing building stock

31. During 2006 BRAC received regular reports and provided comments on the Department's and the Office for Climate Change's on-going review of the sustainability of existing buildings. Around 70 per cent of the housing stock that will be standing in 2050 has already been built. The review aims to identify ways in which existing buildings (both dwellings and non-domestic buildings) can be modified to improve their sustainability, in particular their energy and water efficiency, in the light of climate change.

32. BRAC also received a copy of a report by the Sustainable Development Commission on this issue in early 2006. Given the importance for sustainability of tackling existing building stock, this issue was chosen as the theme for the BRAC 2006 Awayday (see paragraphs 44-47).

Other areas that BRAC considered during 2006

Water Conservation/Efficiency

33. There has been growing concern regarding pressures on water resources. In response to a Ministerial commitment at the Better Building Summit in October 2003 and reiterated in the Government's response to the Barker review, work on regulation on water conservation was taken forward during 2006 as a joint initiative between the Department and Defra. This led to a public consultation on proposals for the regulation of water efficiency in new buildings being published on 13 December 2006, with a closing date of 9 March 2007.
34. Early in 2006 BRAC supported a proposal for a joint Department/Defra Working Party (WP) on regulation of water conservation in buildings. The BRAC Deputy Chairman, Alastair Soane, agreed to chair the WP, and BRAC was further represented on the WP by three other members. The WP built on the work of the previous BRAC Part G (Hygiene) WP. Through the WP and regular updates to the main Committee, BRAC had significant input in the development of the consultation proposals.

Flooding and Flood Resistance/Resilience

35. BRAC was consulted and kept informed during 2006 of progress on research work regarding making buildings more resistant or resilient to flood damage. One output from the project (to be available in early 2007) would be technical guidance that could be used to support the development of requirements that might be made under the Building Regulations. BRAC therefore maintained an overview and discussed the possible establishment of a BRAC Working Party should it be decided appropriate for inclusion of flood resistance/resilience requirements under the Building Regulations.

Part P (Electrical Safety) and Approved Document P

36. Early in the year BRAC discussed the proposed changes to Part P (which were subsequently made in the Building and Approved Inspectors (Amendment) Regulations 2006) and Approved Document P and requested a deferral of the changes to allow further time for discussion. The Department considered BRAC's concerns and held extensive discussion with Local Authority Building Control (LABC). A number of detailed drafting amendments suggested by LABC were included in the final amended version of the Approved Document which was published on 15 March 2006.

Part L (Conservation of fuel & power) – Transitional Provisions

37. The new Part L of the Building Regulations came into effect on 6 April 2006. BRAC had drawn attention to what appeared to be a relatively short period between laying the amendment legislation for Part L and the effective date. This was carefully considered by the Department but the view was taken that the industry was sufficiently prepared for the changes as a result of: the extensive consultation process; publication of the draft Approved Documents; and the September 2005 advance announcement of the April 2006 date. This enabled the transition to be made more swiftly than was usually the case when changing the Building Regulations, but still gave builders six months to a year in which to complete previously approved work before the changes took effect.
38. BRAC was also consulted and kept informed on the new Part L dissemination and training programme for the industry and building control.

Competent Person Schemes Panel

39. BRAC assisted the Department in convening a further Panel to consider applications to operate competent person self-certification schemes, almost all of which would offer compliance support to the revised Part L of the Building Regulations. There were two BRAC members on the Panel, including the Chair. The Panel met in July 2006 to consider a number of applications and advised Ministers to approve all but one of the applications. The main Committee was kept informed of progress.

Local Authority Building Control Charges Review

40. BRAC was consulted on updated proposals for changes to the local authority building control charging regime. The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998 require local authorities to set their own charges in a scheme based on a number of principles, in particular achieving full cost recovery. The purpose of the proposed changes was to achieve greater flexibility, more competitiveness and to more accurately match charges to the actual costs of service delivery. The Department was discussing the detailed proposals with the Local Government Association and these would be further discussed with BRAC, prior to a formal public consultation exercise at the appropriate time.

Proposed Amendments to the Building Regulations and Building (Approved Inspectors) Regulations

41. BRAC was consulted on, and supported, the following proposed amendments to the Building Regulations 2000 and Building (Approved Inspectors) Regulations 2000. The amendments, which were essentially deregulatory in nature, fell into three categories:
- corrections and clarifications;
 - authorisation of further competent person self-certification schemes;

- proposed amendments to the provisions on the commissioning and notification of work on the installation of fixed building services.

Energy Performance of Buildings Directive (EPBD)

42. BRAC was kept informed of progress on work to support the UK's implementation of Articles 7 to 10 of the EPBD, which contain a number of administrative requirements, although many of the provisions that remain to be implemented will not be transposed in the Building Regulations. The Committee was asked to comment on the work and on the practicality and suitability of proposals, in particular those items associated with the production of energy performance certificates on construction. BRAC will continue to be updated/consulted, as appropriate, as the process of implementation through legislation develops.

Information papers and presentations received by BRAC during 2006

43. The Department presented BRAC with a range of information papers over the year and arranged a number of presentations related to the Building Regulations. These were designed to provide members with information so as to assist them in their advisory role, and included:

Building Regulations Update: This regular paper provided information updates on miscellaneous developments on the Building Regulations and other related issues. The paper was usually issued before BRAC meetings and covered issues that were not on the agenda for discussion.

Parliamentary Questions: This regular paper provided copies of all recent PQs related to the Building Regulations.

Casework: This regular paper provided a progress report on the Department's consideration of statutory Building Regulations determination applications and appeals to the Secretary of State, together with copies of recent decisions (with personal details removed).

Corrections to Part L Approved Documents: This paper clarified various corrections to the 2006 Approved Documents L1A, 1B, 2A and 2B (Conservation of fuel and power) that had been made since the first publication of the documents on 15 March 2006.

Approved Document F (Ventilation): This paper provided an update on the new (2006) Approved Document F, which came into force on 6 April 2006. BRAC subsequently commented on an issue in the guidance which had caused contention. This was the recommendation that all replacement windows should be fitted with trickle ventilators, unless the room was adequately ventilated by other installed provisions. Due to cost implications this part of the guidance was withdrawn in September 2006, pending further research.

Updates from Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: A regular feature of BRAC meetings during the year were oral updates on relevant buildings regulations/ standards issues relating to the devolved administrations. These were provided by officials from the Welsh Assembly Government, the Scottish Building Standards Agency (SBSA), and the Department of Finance and Personnel, Northern Ireland, who attend BRAC meetings as observers.

Presentation on New Building Standards in Scotland: Officials from the SBSA gave a presentation at the February BRAC meeting on the new building standards system that had been introduced in Scotland on 1 May 2005.

Presentation on Robust Details: Also at BRAC's February meeting, the Chief Executive of Robust Details Ltd gave a short presentation on Robust Details (RDs), which included information on the company, its terms of reference, and its work in assessing and registering RDs.

Presentation on the Planning Portal: At its July meeting BRAC received a presentation from the Department on the user friendly Building Regulations information that went live on the Planning Portal (www.planningportal.gov.uk) on 5 June 2006. The Committee was advised that information on Building Regulations and Planning was now provided on one site. A major feature of the content was a 3D interactive house that made the web-content more intuitive and accessible. The existing Buildings Regulations content on the Department's website was being reduced to a minimum, redirecting users to the Planning Portal.

Awayday 2006 discussions

44. As in previous years, BRAC members met in Cambridge for their annual Awayday in November 2006. These Awaydays are held to enable members to consider strategic and other topical issues away from the pressures of normal business. Selected officials from the Department also attend the Awaydays.
45. Members chose a single theme for the 2006 event: 'The Importance of the Existing Building Stock'. The day was split into three sessions as follows:
 - What do we have?
 - What might be done?
 - Discussion.
46. To facilitate their discussion, members received presentations during the first two sessions on:
 - The existing building stock (the Department);
 - The interaction of buildings and climate change (UK Climate Impacts Programme);
 - Maintenance and general improvements (Housing Corporation/a Housing Association);

- Options for energy savings (University College, London);
 - Options for water savings (Environment Agency).
47. Following discussion, members concluded that BRAC would like to work more closely with the Department on the issue of the sustainability of the existing building stock and climate change, and agreed a list of topics that merited further consideration:
- to improve existing buildings and the means and opportunities for doing so, i.e. encouragement or enforcement;
 - baseline data for building design parameters, in relation to climate change;
 - how do the Building Regulations fit with the Code for Sustainable Homes;
 - the timescale for change and what resources were needed.

Think Tank meeting

48. For the last few years BRAC members have also periodically convened their own ‘Think Tank’ meetings. As with Awaydays, these have been held to consider strategic and other topical issues to assist the Committee in carrying out its advisory role to Ministers.
49. A Think Tank meeting was held in December 2006 at which members considered developments on previous proposals including those relating to:
- simplified Building Regulations for small domestic buildings;
 - use of IT in relation to the Building Regulations;
 - sustainability;
 - building log book.
50. Members also gave further consideration to other issues, including: the future role of BRAC; the future of the Building Regulations; and the proposals arising from the Awayday relating to improving the existing building stock. The Department responded to the issues raised in a BRAC paper.
51. Following the Think Tank meeting, BRAC held its annual Christmas lunch, part of which was attended by the Minister, Angela Smith MP. The Minister took the opportunity to thank BRAC members for their work in offering advice on all matters related to the Building Regulations.

The Building Regulations Research Advisory Group (BRRAG)

52. Some members of BRAC are also members of the above Group, which provides advice on the Department’s research and technical support etc programme relating to the Building Regulations. It met once in 2006 and agreed that its terms of reference and membership should be reviewed in order to enable its advice to be more strategic. Notwithstanding this, all BRAC members received details of the new projects set up under the Building Regulations Research and Technical Support Programme in 2006 and were kept in touch with key developments throughout the year.

The Building Control Performance Standards Advisory Group (BCPSAG)

53. The BCPSAG was established by Ministers to provide advice and guidance for building control bodies on how they should deliver a quality service to their clients. BCPSAG includes representatives from the building control industry and is chaired by the Chairman of BRAC in an independent capacity, but another BRAC member also sits on BCPSAG to specifically represent the Committee.
54. Recent outputs from BCPSAG have included a revised performance standards handbook and a set of building control performance indicators. The Group’s work in future will include considering more closely how these outputs might be further developed and deployed.

Publications

55. The publications with which BRAC was involved during 2006 can be found, and be downloaded free of charge, via the Department’s website: www.communities.gov.uk and the Planning Portal: www.planningportal.gov.uk. This includes: Statutory Instruments (i.e. regulations), Approved Documents, Departmental Circulars, Circular Letters, Consultation Papers and other publications.
56. Hard copies of these documents can be obtained as follows:

Priced publications by mail order from:

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BRAC Membership and Observers during 2006

Membership

Chairman **Michael Finn, FRICS, FBEng, FRSA, ACI Arb**

Chartered Surveyor. Director, Fox Management and Consulting.

Deputy Chairman **Dr Alastair Soane, BSc, PhD, CEng, FICE, FStructE**

Director of Confidential Reporting on Structural Safety (CROSS). Visiting Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, University of Liverpool.

Members **Paul Allen OBE, FITSA, DMA #**

Vice President, Trading Standards Institute. Chairman, European Food Law Association of the United Kingdom.

Professor May Cassar, BA(History), BSc(Conservation), MSc(Environmental Design and Engineering), FIIC, AMUKIC, FRSA

Director, UCL Centre for Sustainable Heritage. Former Environmental Advisor, Museums & Galleries Commission. Member, Research Advisory Panel, English Heritage; CIBSE Technical Task Group revising the CIBSE Guide B on Ventilation, Air-conditioning and Acoustics; and the BSI Technical Committee on Storage and Exhibition of Archive Documents.

John Conway, MICE #

Chartered Civil Engineer. Project and Management Consultant.

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Chartered Surveyor. Group Head of Building Control, National House-Building Council. Vice Chairman, Association of Consultant Approved Inspectors. Member, Consortium of European Building Control.

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**# Membership ended
31 January 2006**

**## Membership ended
30 September 2006**

Observers

The Welsh Assembly Government

The Scottish Building Standards Agency

The Department of Finance and Personnel, Northern Ireland





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