

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL BUILDING ACHIEVES A 'C' FOR ITS DEC

1 October was the deadline for all public buildings over 1000m² to have a Display Energy Certificate (DEC), and Birmingham City Council has completed DEC's for a wide range of buildings across their extensive property portfolio.

DECs show the actual energy usage and energy efficiency of buildings and are an important first step to finding out and managing the energy efficiency of public sector buildings such as schools, hospitals, local authority offices and museums across England and Wales - helping to make the whole country more sustainable.

In Birmingham, one building of particular public and architectural interest and complexity is the Council House. Located in Victoria Square, in the city centre, the Council House is approximately 150 years old, with an extension that was built about 50 years later.

The Council House is a multifunctional building, with features such as a Council Chamber, formal reception rooms and political offices, in addition to an extension, housing Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and council department offices.

The classification of the building made it a challenge to identify an accurate rating when completing the DEC. For example, the museum area, because of the valuable artefacts, requires 24/7 temperature control; whilst other rooms are controlled and monitored by a LAN connected central Building Energy Management system.



Inside the Council House

In December 2007 the Council House connected to a new energy scheme called the Broad Street District Energy scheme and the benefits included energy cost savings coupled with low carbon energy. The Scheme is owned and operated by Birmingham District Energy Company (BDEC), which is a partnership between Birmingham City Council and the Utilicom Group Limited.

Coral Tilling, Sustainability Consultant for Birmingham City Council's Urban Design, said, "We have recently made a number of significant changes to the way we manage energy at the Council House and all of these affected the DEC rating we received.

"The C rating the Council House received for its DEC was a great achievement for a building of its age. With a combination of the large site area and long hours of use being connected to the Broad Street District Energy Scheme has helped improve the outcome significantly. We will now look how to further improve efficient energy usage at the Council House to improve our rating."



The Council House

www.communities.gov.uk/epbd