

IBCI News

Volume 3: Issue 1

December, 2003

**We wish all
our readers a
Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year**



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Conference 2003—Another great success

The IBCI Building Control Conference took place over two days at the Nuremore Hotel, Carrickmacross, Co. Monaghan on the 10th and 11th June 2003. In keeping with the policy of visiting the regions, Council decided to hold the 2003 conference in the north-east. The theme of the conference was “*Building in Our Changing Climate*”. The proceedings were opened by IBCI President, Philip O’Brien and the speakers on day one focussed on actual climate change and the expected effects it will have on the built environment. Jay Stuart from the Energy Research Group spoke about “EU Directive 2002/91/EC on the Energy Performance of Buildings”. The topic of “Climate Change and the Built Environment” was addressed by Chris Sanders of the BRE who detailed trends and future environmental change. Olav Berge from Norway told us about the Norwegian system of building control and how they deal with their more extreme climate and Joe Beggan from Kingspan gave a presentation on the “Benefits of High Performance Insulation”.

The IBCI were pleased to welcome Mr. Noel Ahern T.D., Minister for Housing and Urban Renewal who

addressed the conference on issues affecting building control in Ireland. That evening the delegates attended the conference dinner.

Day two included presentations from Pat Minogue of the DEHLG on “Part L: Conservation of Fuel and Energy, 2002 (Dwellings)” and Noel McKenna on “Part F: Ventilation, 2002”. Papers were also given by Eamonn McMahon on “An Introduction to Sustained Urban Drainage Systems” and Conor Taaffe from Homebond who delivered a presentation on “Building Defects Associated with Insulation, Ventilation and Drainage”. The council of the institute would like to place on record

their thanks to all those who presented papers.

A Trade Exhibition was held in conjunction with the conference and the organisers would like to thank the companies and the individuals who took part. Council would also like to thank the management and staff of the Nuremore Hotel for the service provided.

Within the IBCI, a great debt of thanks is also due to the conference committee who worked very hard to ensure that the conference was such a success. They have set a very high standard which will be hard to follow.



T. Johnson, P. O'Brien, Minister Noel Ahern T.D. and M. O'Neill

No Sparks yet !!!!!

It would appear that no further developments have occurred on the implementation of the Farrell Grant Sparks recommendations for the changes to Building Control and Fire Service. The IBCI are fully aware of the limitations of the current system and have made separate submissions to the DEHLG. The IBCI would like to stress that no consultation took place with IBCI prior to the publication of Sparks report and we believe that inherent in the review plan is the disbandment of building control in its current form without any examination or outline of a proper BC system. IBCI propose a review of the current system and propose

ring fencing and reform of building control fees to provide a proper Building Control system rather than tagging it on to an existing service. FGS does not address at all how the Fire service can resource and provide a proper BC system. BC would seem to have an even further reduction in priority and basically is being tacked on to Fire Certs. Where will existing building control personnel be redeployed. The question needs to be asked - Does a random monitoring system with a maximum of 10% coverage in many cases and in some a lot less lead to adequate building Control? IBCI thinks the answer is NO How can a minimally resourced Service deliver compliance with Building Regulations. In some EU countries

there is a ratio of one Building Control Officer to 5000 people If the BC Bill (which IBCI have not been consulted on) proposes a Self Certification system who will certify the Certifiers ?. Currently many even professionally qualified personnel are designing and certifying buildings which do not comply with the Regulations. Continental research has shown that up to 60% defects are caused by design defects. In the current non approval system many design faults are inherent in designs before they are discovered and in many cases are impossible to correct. Currently many buildings are being built with no site supervision by designers , who may be employed just to get Planning permission. Will the new

Consortium of European Building Control Manchester Meeting

Consortium of European Building Control
Business Meeting No 29.

This meeting took place in Manchester from the 21st to the 24th November 2003 inclusive.

The meetings were held in conjunction with the RICS, the CEEC and the AEEBC, all of which are European Professional organisations involved in Construction.

Friday afternoon and Saturday morning were devoted to considerable discussion on future strategy and the direction the Consortium was taking. The general conclusions reached was that in the future there will be much more involvement of the delegates in tasks to be undertaken between the 6 monthly meetings.

Much more survey work is to be undertaken to involve all the members and to get accurate overall data on what's going on all around the membership. Surveys and work requiring immediate action include
Revision of the 1995 CEBC Document on the Technical Regulations in each Country
CEBC survey on Building Control systems in Europe
Questionnaire from Poland on the principles of functioning of attestation of building products conformity system
Questionnaire from Slovenia on the Legislative system in the other Countries.

Areas suggested where CEBC should be heading included
Countries should look at and learn from experiences in other countries
Dealing with new technologies and trends in construction
Defects with new materials and in existing construction and the sharing of this information
Accurate survey of existing resources in Building Control
CE Marking
Indoor air quality
EU Energy Directive, problems for Building Control

Need to talk to and advise the EU Commission and increase CEBC profile

The whole structure of the CEBC was analysed and there were suggestions for a paid full time or part time Secretary General. The AGM elected David Smith as Chairman and Hugh Johnson as Secretary General and Treasurer for a further 3-year term as the rules allow. However the Policy Group will review the whole structure of CEBC and the roles of the officers and delegates and may come up with a reduced term of 2 years.

On Monday Tariq Nawaz, ODPM gave a paper on the UK (England and Wales) Building Control System, Hugh Johnson gave a paper on Public Sector Building Control and Neil Cooper, NHBC gave a paper on the Private Sector Building Control

Interesting facts to emerge were that there were 4500 professional persons directly involved in the Building Control area of which approx 10% were in the Private Approved Inspectors who are involved in the housing area. In a small mainly rural Local Authority of 100,000 people there are 8 professional Building Control Officers In UK it is an Approval system and in most cases designs are approved before construction and all developments are inspected. The Local Authority is responsible for enforcement in the Public and Private areas.

In the discussion that followed it emerged that in some other countries there is a ratio of one Building Control Officer to 5000 population. The Approval system in the UK ensures that design flaws are invariably picked up at the design stage. Interestingly surveys of building defects in Scandinavia and elsewhere have shown that up to 60% of defects and non-compliances are caused by design and specification flaws.

On Saturday afternoon Visits were organised to various new buildings in Manchester including The G Mex

(converted railway station) and Manchester Convention Centre and the Castlefields regeneration area. The Meetings were held in new state of the art buildings, the Lowry Centre and the Bridgewater Hall. Other notable recent additions to Manchester include the Triangle (Corn Exchange) and the Printworks refurbishments, the Urbis museum, Lowry retail outlet, Manchester Airport and many refurbished old industrial warehouse buildings. Delegates for their sins also had to suffer a banquet at the Old Trafford (theatre of nightmares) on Saturday night.

Great credit is due to the RICS for the excellent organisation of this event.



Minister Ahern with Johnny Mac Gettigan



Joan and Brenda who ensured the smooth running of the conference

A Letter from the IBCI President

It is an honour and a privilege for me to serve as president with my fellow Council members of the Building Control Institute. Our Council members are an active and dedicated group in promoting the aims of the Institute and I would like to take the opportunity to thank them for their time and interest in representing Building Control professionals around the country. I would particularly like to congratulate Philip O'Brien on his successful year as President.

As we all know, Building Control in Ireland is facing into a period of change. The Minister for the Environment and Local Government has moved to implement the recommendations of the report on Fire Safety and Fire Services in Ireland. IBCI has been acknowledged as a stakeholder but has heard little of the process in the last year. We await the

publishing of the new Building Control Bill to see if this will give any indication to the future of Building Control. This period of uncertainty is not good for Building Control in Ireland, as experienced personnel in Local Authorities are seeking new career opportunities in other fields. Through membership of the Consortium of European Building Control (CEBC), the IBCI maintains contact with other building professionals working in countries across Europe. The exchange of information is very important and I would advise members to visit the CEBC website through the links in our own website. There are a numerous papers on relevant topics, which would be of interest to members. For your information, it is intended to hold the 2004 Conference in Waterford on the 30th and 31st of March. The full

details of the conference will be available in early January.

To conclude, I would like to take the opportunity to wish all members and their families a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Michael O'Neill
President IBCI

Northern Ireland Building Control Convention.

Conserving our Built Heritage.

Our Northern Ireland Colleagues held their convention in Limavaddy on the 13th and 14th of November. The theme of the convention was "Conserving our Built Heritage" and the speakers represented a cross-section of interested parties from Heritage Officers to Developers.

The convention was well attended by Councillors and Building Control Officers from all the 26 Local Authorities in Northern Ireland.

The convention heard views from Building professionals and Local Authority Councillors on issues on Building Control and the Built Environment.

It was interesting to note that even though the Councils are better staffed than those in the Republic, the same issues still arise in relation to the Built Environment and Building Control in general.

President: Michael O'Neill

Vice President: Fineen O'Driscoll

Treasurer: Tom Johnson

Membership

Secretary: Pat O'Donnell

Publication

Officers: Johnny MacGettigan
Kevin Sheridan

Council Members: Joe Boyle,
Philip O'Brien, Robert M. Foley



Mr. Barry Casey RIP

Past President IBCI

Condolences to the family of Mr. Barry Casey, past president of IBCI from the Council and members of the Institute.

The Council of the Institute 2003/04



The Council of the Institute
wish all our members a
Happy Christmas
and a Prosperous New Year

What Consultation !!!!!

Consultation Process

T.G.D– B (Fire Safety)

Minister Martin Cullen announced (22 August 2003) the publication, for consultation, of new **draft** Building Regulations (**Part B – Fire Safety**) and accompanying Technical Guidance Document that will provide higher Fire Safety Standards for Buildings. Submissions on the Consultation Document were to be made in writing or by e-mail to Aidan Smith, Building Standard Section, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Custom House, Dublin 1 (aidan_smith@environ.ie) not later than **Friday 28 November 2003**.

Regarding the above, the IBCI Council submitted to the DEHLG the following points for consideration :

The Council suggests that it would be better that no amendments other than the Construction Product Directive references be made at this time as the changes might be seen as a full review of Part B which it is not. A full review will be required in the near future.

The Council would suggest that at the time of this full review the following issues amongst others should be looked at:

- Safety catches should be defined in the case of fire escape windows.
- Definition of “ remote” in relation of clause 1.5.2.(iv) (ii) Cooking facilities.
- The fire rating of non- habitable rooms in loft conversions.

T.G.D – C (Site Preparation and

Resistance to Moisture)

Minister Martin Cullen announced (25 July 2003) the publication, for consultation, of a **draft** Technical Guidance Document (TGD) – C under the Building Regulations to further enhance Radon prevention in new buildings. Submissions on the Consultation Document were to be made in writing or by E-mail not later than Monday **31 October 2003**.

Regarding the above, the IBCI Council submitted to the DEHLG the following points for consideration :

- The Council suggests that consideration be given at both **Design and Construction** stages to the provision of measures to prevent the ingress of Radon.
- The Council would suggest that with regard to 2.12 Membranes used for Radon Protection, that there would be clarification of the criteria associated with “ radon permeability” and “radon transmittance” and the protocols associated with the testing of these barriers. The Council feels that there should be mandatory testing for Radon for all houses.

Building Control Bill 2003

Development of proposals for the *Registration of Building Professionals*, which will give statutory protection to the titles of “Architect”, “Quantity Surveyor”, together with amendments to the Building Control Act 1990 is provided for in the Building Control Bill, 2003, currently with the Parliamentary Counsel’s Office for formal drafting.

IRISH BUILDING CONTROL INSTITUTE

If you would like to contribute an article to the IBCI Newsletter, or comment on anything contained in this issue, please write to:

IBCI News,
P.O. Box 3667,
Ballsbridge,
Dublin 4.
www.i-b-c-i.ie

No consultation with IBCI. **Conference 2004** **Tower Hotel** **Waterford**

March 30th and 31st

The Irish Building Control Institute is pleased to announce that its building control conference will take place this year in Waterford, on the 30th and 31st March. The theme of the conference is **“Building Control-Raising the standards”**.

We look forward to another successful and enjoyable conference in the south east.

If you would like to contribute, please send your letter to the usual address. Please note that letters may be edited to fit the space available.