

Assent Newsletter Spring 2022



Spring 2022

Hello 2022!

We have had a very positive start to the year and activity levels have increased as we head into the 2nd Quarter.

We'll take a quick look at some positive news as well as new initiatives from across the network.

John Miles. Business Development Manager



Update from Iain



Dear customers,

It doesn't seem like five minutes since we published the last newsletter of 2021 and here we are with the end of the first-quarter of 2022.

I hope you are all keeping well, the Covid statistics seem to be heading in the right direction and it seems that day to day life is getting back to a more usual rhythm, the road networks certainly seem to be hugely busier and the same can be said for construction across all sectors, with really strong demand for our services. As a result of high levels of demand we have made a very positive start to the year.

We have accomplished a great deal in 2022 so far. As well as servicing all our clients, we have made fantastic progress with our operational changes. This has involved moving our offices, partners and people into our multi-licenced structure and we have invested heavily in technology to transfer and safeguard projects by moving them into all of our subsidiaries dependant on location .

We have been contacting all our clients about transferring projects into our subsidiary businesses and seeking permission, providing information and reassurance that this is simply an operational change to give greater client focus. The level of service, people in each office and the expert teams managing these projects remains unchanged.

We hope to have all projects transferred throughout Q2 2022 and move successfully on through the remainder of the year.

We continue to invest in our network of offices and teams with support, training and coaching on an on-going basis. We also recognise that there is a shortage of qualified chartered building control surveyors in the market and we have therefore invested in and launched the Assent Academy, led by Paul Armstrong.

His goal is to help attract talent (graduates and apprentices) grow and develop all our people to support projected growth – this is vital to our future success and that of the industry as a whole.

I couldn't close, without acknowledging events closer and further away from home. Firstly, the very sudden and sad passing of our dear friend and colleague John Brand who was a big part of our business for many years. He will be sadly missed by us all – we thank him immensely for all he contributed. I attended his funeral in January and his wonderful family did him proud, with a fitting tribute to his life.

Secondly the dreadful events in the Ukraine with the Russian invasion and all its horrifying consequences – we will be doing all we can as a business from a humanitarian perspective for the people who are experiencing the destruction of their lives and country. I am part of an Equestrian community group in Cheshire, and they are co-ordinating collections for delivery to the refugee camps in Poland. When the Equestrian World and Assent Building Control come together, we can make a small but significant difference.

We set up HQ as a rendezvous point for collection which have since been forwarded and we have already contributed to filling 9 horseboxes full of critical supplies for Ukraine with the intention to bring some refugees back to Europe and the UK.

A huge thank you to everybody for all your support and we look forward to another successful year ahead.

Kindest Regards,
Iain

Network News

A round-up of news from across our office network

LB Building Control Audit

We are pleased to announce that LB Building Control passed their ISO audit in July last year.

Congratulations to Kate, Jason and all the team.



Certificate No:254582016

Insurance Certificates

We are pleased to share that our insurance certificates have been successfully renewed.

You can view these certificates online by following [this link](#).

RICS Young Surveyor of the Year Awards

In November, RICS held their Young Surveyor of the Year Awards, and two of our very own team had been shortlisted.

Charlotte Turner was shortlisted for the Young Apprentice of the Year Award.

And

Jake Green was shortlisted for the Young Surveyor of the Year Award.

Making the shortlist is a huge accolade in itself and we would like to send our congratulations to them,



Network News

A round-up of news from across our office network

Charity Fundraising – The Brain Tumour Charity

Last summer, Glyn Lyon from our Reading office took part in a charity fundraising event to raise money for The Brain Tumor Charity.

Glyn lost his mother to a brain tumour and now his brother is fighting the same tumour.

The event consisted of a charity football match with stalls, raffles, kids entertainment and games. The event was a huge success with around 200 people turning up in support of raising money.

The central event was the football match where Team University of Leicester FC (where Glyn used to play) took on a group of his friends and family. Glyn says the match was fun, but "a hard slog for the out of shape family and friends team".



The final score was Friends & Family - 1, Team University of Leicester FC - too many to count!

The total so far is just under £7,000 and the Just Giving page is still live, so if you want to donate you can do so by clicking below.

[Brain Tumour Charity](#)

Charity Fundraising 2022

As a company we have selected two charities to raise funds for. The British Heart Foundation, in memory of our colleague John Brand, and the Lighthouse Club.

We will each be choosing a distance to cover, ranging from 20-40 miles, and aiming to raise £5,000 for each charity.

Our challenge will start from April 1st and will end on May 31st.

We have created a team [Just Giving page](#) for this with links to the different charity fundraisers.

Any donation, whether big or small, is greatly appreciated.



Project News

Victorian House – Hackney

Joe Wooding

This dark, Victorian kitchen has been extended and reworked to create a bright communal space.

The project celebrates the clients love of concrete throughout, with concrete benches, floors, worktops and a concrete plinth.



HQ for Women's Health

Luis Alonso

The HQ for Women's Health is designed to bring people together to share ideas and experiences. It holds work space for its more than 200 staff, conferencing facilities and a café, as well as a prayer room and a family room.

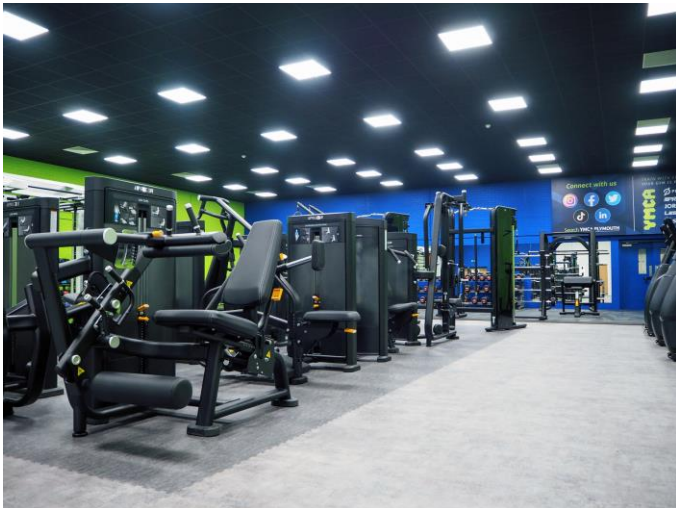
The buildings character has been maintained with elements of original brickwork and trusses being left exposed.

Project News

Poets Place – New Build Apartments in Liverpool

Paul Holden

Poets place is a 127 apartment rental scheme in Liverpool. This new development offers a mix of studio, one and two bedroom homes, which come with undercroft parking.



YMCA Gym – Plymouth

Des Heath

This gym is a new addition to the YMCA Charity, who focus on serving young people and their community.

Des said: "We were happy to be involved in this local community centre improvement project, seeing this old building finally being brought up to date with new equipment and facilities for the local community. The client was very proud of the project and everyone involved, and it is very likely there will be further developments in the near future."

Project News

Taunton School – New Dining Hall

John Gower in the Taunton office has been the project manager of the construction of a new dining hall in Taunton School. The space sits adjacent to the school's Grade II-listed Main Building and is also designed for use as an event space that can be used by both the school and community.

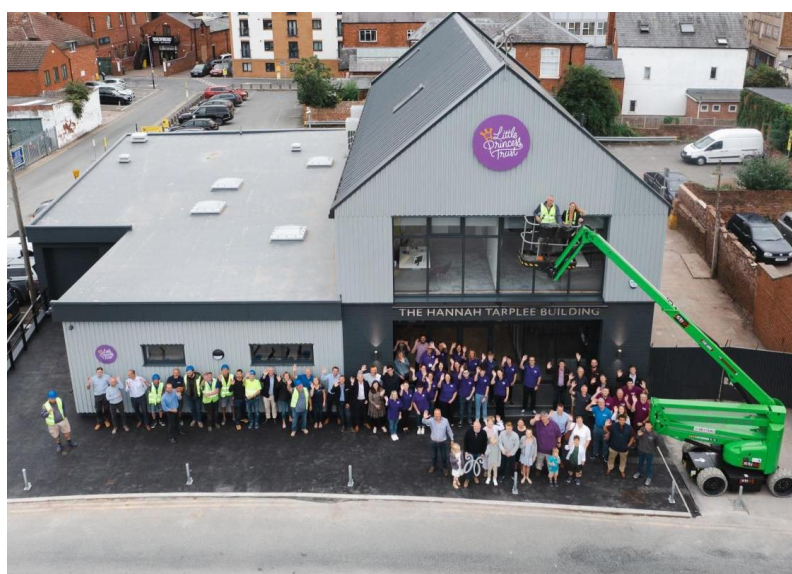
The most interesting part of this project is the combination of the old listed part of the school being extended with a very contemporary extension



Little Princess Trust Headquarters - Hereford

Richard Williams carried out the building control on the new headquarters for the Little Princess Trust, a charity which provides wigs to children who have lost their own hair due to cancer treatments.

The new headquarters are named after Hannah Tarplee, whose parents set up the charity in her honour after her passing. Hannah's mum and the charities founder wanted the charity to stay true to its Hereford origins, hence location of the new building.



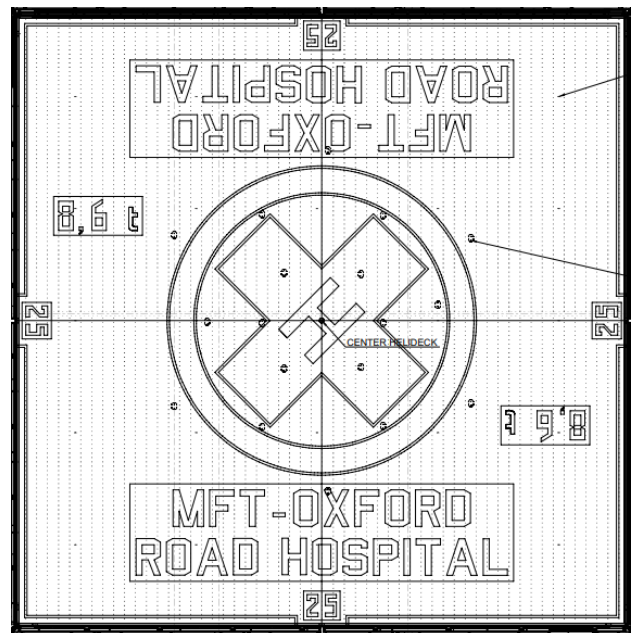
Project News

Manchester Hospital

Ashley Thompson in the Liverpool office has been the project manager of the construction of a new Helicopter landing pad, Link Bridge and lift enhancements works at Manchester Royal Infirmary.

The project enables critically ill or injured patients to be transported by helicopter direct to Manchester Royal Infirmary.

The new structure also helps with the transportation of patients to the adjacent Royal Manchester Children's Hospital.



Assent in the Media



Learning Lessons in Offsite Construction

Modern methods of construction are increasing and the industry realises the advantages of offsite construction. Especially true in the education sector where speed and delivery means minimal disruption to schools. How can Building Control make the grade?



Fire Risk in Heritage Buildings

Richard Williams, Divisional Director, speaks with Ecclesiastical and Heritage World about how to protect the UK's unique heritage buildings from fire whilst ensuring the unique building features remain unaltered..

SPECIFIER REVIEW

What the Future Homes Standard means to Developers

How will the upcoming Part L Building regulation changes affect your current developments? John Miles talks with Specifier Review about how Approved Inspectors can support Property Developers to adhere to these new, tighter regulations.



Podcast: How Building Control has Adapted since Covid-19

COVID-19 has undoubtedly affected the built environment. Jane Keely, Director of Assent Building Control, takes part in a Podcast series with the University College of Estate Management, looking at how Building Control has adapted to these changes and challenges.

Assent in the Media

Professional BUILDER

A Building Control guide to chimney works

Exposed to the element chimneys receive the full force of adverse weather and cause common safety and structural issues. John Miles, Technical Manager at Assent Building Control provides a building control guide for Chimney Works.

BSEE

Building Services & Environmental Engineer

Uniting to Improve Fire Safety Standards

The Construction Industry needs to work collectively to create a sea-change for Fire Safety. With the fallout of Grenfell the construction industry is facing turbulent times with deep rooted issues that must be addressed if we are to avoid any further tragedies from happening. Paul-le-Mare, Assent Associate talks about the Fire Safety Building Regulations Group he formed to unite the industry.

OFFSITE HUB

Offsite Construction and Building Control - a Perfect Match?

Offsite construction is a building method of choice with increasing popularity. It offers both speed and sustainability benefits but building regulations have been slow to catch-up with this future focused method of construction.

John Miles, Technical Director of Assent speaks with Offsite Hub about how Building Control can adopt practices that help both manufacturers and developers meet building regulations.



UK CONSTRUCTION™
ONLINE

UK Shortage of Building Control Professionals

Skills shortages across the construction sector is causing Industry Disruption. With decreasing numbers of Approved Inspectors and no sign of new talent on the horizon this poses a potential critical situation for the sector. Iain Thomson, CEO takes a deeper look at the potential impact and solutions with UK Construction Media.

Assent in the Media



Closing the Gender Gap in Construction

With women making up 12.5% of the construction workforce, according to GMB the built environment is missing out on a huge untapped pool of talent. Jane Keeley director at Assent Building Control discusses the benefits that a career in building control can have for women with PBC Today.



How to Bridge the Building Control Skills Gap

The ongoing skills shortage continues to bring volatility to the construction sector and building control is by no means immune to this.

Here, Paul Armstrong shares his views on how building control should be looking at the bigger picture to appreciate the long-term effects of the skills crisis, the key attributes someone needs to go into a career in building control and the different routes to get there.



Meeting Building Regulations in Heritage Buildings

Richard Williams sets out top tips for achieving building regulations in heritage sites, including fire safety, thermal performance and acoustics and access.



Taking the First Step in a Career in Building Control

As part of National Apprenticeship week, Planning & Building Control Today spoke to Building Control apprentice Charlotte Turner about her experience so far on Assent's Degree Apprenticeship programme.

Technical Update

Changes to Part L

Changes to Part L show a mandatory 30 per cent cut in carbon for all new homes is among a range of changes to the Building Regs. John Miles summarises the key points.

In the shift towards a Future Buildings Standard published last year, the government has introduced a range of changes to the Building Regulations, including a mandatory 30 per cent cut in carbon for all new homes and a 27 per cent cut for other buildings, including offices and shops.

The Department for Levelling-Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) set out the changes, which include interim uplifts to Part L and Part F, and the introduction of Part O, in its response to a public consultation on the Future Buildings Standard, concluded in April.

The rules will come into force in June this year, with a one-year transition period to allow for planning applications underway at that time.

Alongside amendments to the Building Regs, five new approved documents are published:

- Approved Document L, volume 1: dwellings;
- Approved Document L, volume 2: buildings other than dwellings;
- Approved Document F, volume 1: dwellings;
- Approved Document F, volume 2: buildings other than dwellings;
- and an entirely new Approved Document O covering overheating.

Part L - Interim uplifts to standards for non-domestic buildings

Non-domestic buildings must achieve an average of 27 per cent reduction in CO₂, relative to 2013 standards. This is the more ambitious of two options put forward by the government in its consultation, the first was for a 22 per cent reduction.

The government aim was to achieve a balance between making progress towards the Future Homes Standard, due in 2025, while providing the industry 'with the time it needs to develop the supply chains and skills that will be necessary and accounting for market factors'.

Part L amendments introduce a new principal performance metric measuring energy efficiency. 'Primary energy' will be used in combination with CO₂ metrics to assess compliance with Part L. Primary energy calculations consider factors such as the efficiency of the building's heating system; power station efficiency for electricity; and energy used to produce fuel and deliver it to the building.



Changes to Part L

Most respondents to the consultation (62.2 per cent) said they disagreed with using primary energy as the main performance metric and the government has said the approach will be reviewed before implementation of the full Future Buildings Standard.

The new fabric standard uplifts introduce new minimum efficiency standards for both new and replacement thermal elements, windows and doors. For example, the U-value of new walls is $0.26\text{W/m}^2\text{K}$, compared to $0.35\text{W/m}^2\text{K}$ previously. Most types of new window, roof window and curtain walling must achieve a U value of 1.6, versus 2.2 previously.

Although government are still pursuing a fabric first standard, building services in new non-domestic buildings are also being updated, the minimum efficacy of lighting installations in new non-domestic buildings has been increased to 95 luminaire lumens per circuit watt for general lighting and 80 luminaire lumens per circuit watt for display lighting. This is a holistic approach with lower efficacies in some rooms can be offset by higher efficacies in others.

A separate standard for lighting that requires a high level of optical control, including innovative high excitation purity lighting, has been introduced.

New non-domestic buildings now require a building automation and control system if they include a heating or air-conditioning system of 180kW or over, rather than 290kW originally proposed.

A new minimum standard is introduced to ensure that wet space heating systems in new buildings are designed to operate with a maximum flow temperature of 55°C – considered important for system efficiency.

All space heating and domestic hot water boiler installations in existing non-domestic buildings must now include controls to improve the effective efficiency of the system. The minimum standards for air distribution, comfort cooling systems and lighting will also apply in existing non-domestic buildings. BACs must also have a maximum flow temperature of 55°C .

Part L adopts CIBSE's TM23 as the single approved methodology for testing airtightness for non-domestic buildings to avoid 'practical difficulties' of using multiple testing methodologies.

Changes to Part L

Part F - Interim uplifts to standards for non-domestic buildings

New guidance includes the addition of a requirement to minimise the ingress of external pollutants and the installation of proper installation of ventilation systems.

New guidance on performance-based ventilation standards will allow designers to assess ventilation strategies against individual volatile organic compounds, based on data from Public Health England, as an alternative route to using a total VOC limit.

Part F recommends that all replacement windows in non-domestic buildings are fitted with background trickle ventilators unless it can be shown that replacement windows would not reduce useful ventilation or that a mechanical ventilation system is present. Where outside noise is an issue, attenuating background ventilators should be fitted.

Mechanically ventilated common spaces in offices should have a minimum air supply rate of 0.5 l/s.m² and there is a new requirement for the installation of CO₂ monitors in offices and specifically in 'high risk' rooms where there may be a risk of airborne infection.

Amended guidance on recirculating systems states systems should be capable of operating in a mode that prevents the recirculation of air within spaces or between different spaces, rooms or zones within offices, unless suitable filtering or cleaning systems are in place.

Government proposals to increase required ventilation capacity in offices and specify ventilation rates in 'high risk' rooms in response to Covid-19 have not been adopted. This is in anticipation of more concrete evidence on the impacts.

Part L - Standards for domestic buildings

Minimum new fabric efficiency standards are being introduced for new and replacement thermal elements, windows and doors in existing homes. For example, the U value for walls is tightened, from 0.28W/m² K to 0.18W/m²; and for windows and rooflights from 1.6, or Window Energy Rating Band C, to 1.4 or Window Energy Rating Band B. The U value for doors is cut from 1.8 to 1.4. However, fire doors are permitted to meet a U-value of 1.8 W/m²K in line with the previous standards.

The government has adopted a 'full fabric specification' for setting the level of the Fabric Energy Efficiency Standard (FEES) in new homes under Part L. Extensions to existing properties must now adhere to the SAP method of compliance for metrics of fabric energy efficiency and primary energy. In the section on building services, wet-space heating systems in existing domestic buildings must be designed to operate with a maximum flow temperature of 55°C, as with non-domestic buildings.

Part F - Standards for existing domestic buildings

The regulation introduces a new requirement that when energy efficiency work is done in buildings, the ventilation is not made any worse, in line with existing measures for controlled services and fittings.



Changes to Part L

To support homeowners, Part F now recommends that all installations of mechanical extract ventilation and installations of new background ventilators come with guidance on why ventilation is important for the health of buildings and their occupants.

A commissioning sheet and checklist, including design flow rates and maintenance requirements, should also be provided when ventilation systems are installed.

Part O - Standards for overheating in new residential buildings

Part O aims to ensure that new residential buildings, including homes, care homes, student accommodation and children's homes are designed to reduce overheating. It splits England into areas of 'moderate risk' and 'high risk' of overheating, the latter including urban and some suburban parts of London.

The regulation adopts a 'simplified' route to compliance based on minimising solar gain and removing excess heat. It sets standards based on whether the house or residential unit is cross-ventilated, considers orientation and introduces a standard for the maximum amount of glazing allowed in a single room.

Dynamic thermal analysis methods of overheating risk in homes allows more sophisticated analysis of buildings as an alternative route to compliance over the simplified method.

Part O adopts measures to ensure overheating strategies are safe and usable by occupants, taking into account noise and pollution near the home, as well as the safety and usability of the windows and security, which may affect occupant behaviour. Information on overheating strategies must be passed to the building owner in the form of a Home User Guide.

Looking Ahead: Future Buildings Standard

Implemented in 2025, the Future Buildings Standard will aim to produce non-domestic buildings running on low-carbon heat with the best possible fabric standards. No further energy efficiency retrofit work will be necessary to make buildings zero-carbon as the electricity grid decarbonises.

A full technical consultation on the Future Buildings Standard is planned to start in 2023, including proposals for the technical detail and associated draft guidance.



NEW Initiatives

The Next Generation Building Control

We are part of a new initiative to attract young talent into the industry.

The Next Generation Building Control initiative is aimed to recruit young people/graduates into the industry by showing what life as an Approved Inspector can be.

Please take a look at their Instagram page and click follow to see more.

<https://www.instagram.com/nextgenerationbc21/>

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16 posts

134 followers

271 following

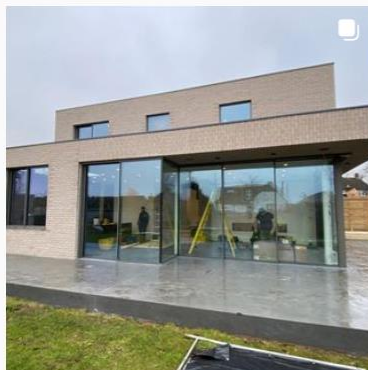
BuildingControlNextGeneration

Ever thought about a Career in the Construction Industry? Make Building Control your first choice

POSTS

VIDEOS

TAGGED



“Shaping the future of building control”

We have also been working on our Mission, Vision, Values.

Vision

Our vision and our goal for the future. A thought leader and innovator, influencing and shaping the future of building control (approved inspection and complementary market segments)

Mission

To support our clients in delivering safe, efficient and accessible buildings through our expertise, innovation and uncompromising ethical standards.

Values

Our company values are our core beliefs and the foundations on which the business is built, ensuring professional standards & conduct is upheld.

