

## The Top 10 Questions Asked by Planners – Answered.

This document supports the resources found within the Local Government section of the BREEAM website, and provides answers to the key questions most commonly asked by planning professionals.

It is strongly advised that reference to the full resource suite be made when looking to write policy and/or determine projects.

### Questions

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### 1. What is the BREEAM Family?

The BREEAM Family is a suite of certification schemes which drive built environment performance across the entire sustainability spectrum including specifications for better public health, more resource efficient and responsible construction practices, protection and enhancements of our natural world, and radical actions against the adverse impacts of climate change including climate resilience.

They give greater confidence in the delivery of outcomes through independently assessed certification models and provide assessment frameworks within which all industry actors can conceptualise, design and deliver more sustainable, better quality places.

They are used by a wide range of stakeholders for varying reasons; by financiers to manage risk, by developers to differentiate and by policy makers and planners to deliver on strategic objectives.

Different schemes have been designed for use during different stages of the built environment lifecycle.

- BREEAM Communities is a flexible framework used to measure, improve and support engagement during the master planning process of large-scale development.
- CEEQUAL drives sustainability performance across civil engineering, infrastructure, landscaping and public realm projects.
- BREEAM New Construction is used to assess the design and construction of new, non domestic buildings.
- The Homes Quality Mark is the badge of a better home. It enables house builders to showcase the quality of their homes, policy makers to drive standards and consumer to make more informed choices.
- BREEAM Refurbishment and Fit Out assesses the varying scopes of non-domestic refurbishment and fit out projects including those of historic/cultural value.
- BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment supports more sustainable housing renovations.
- BREEAM In-Use is used to optimise and enhance a building, or portfolios, sustainability performance when occupied and operational.

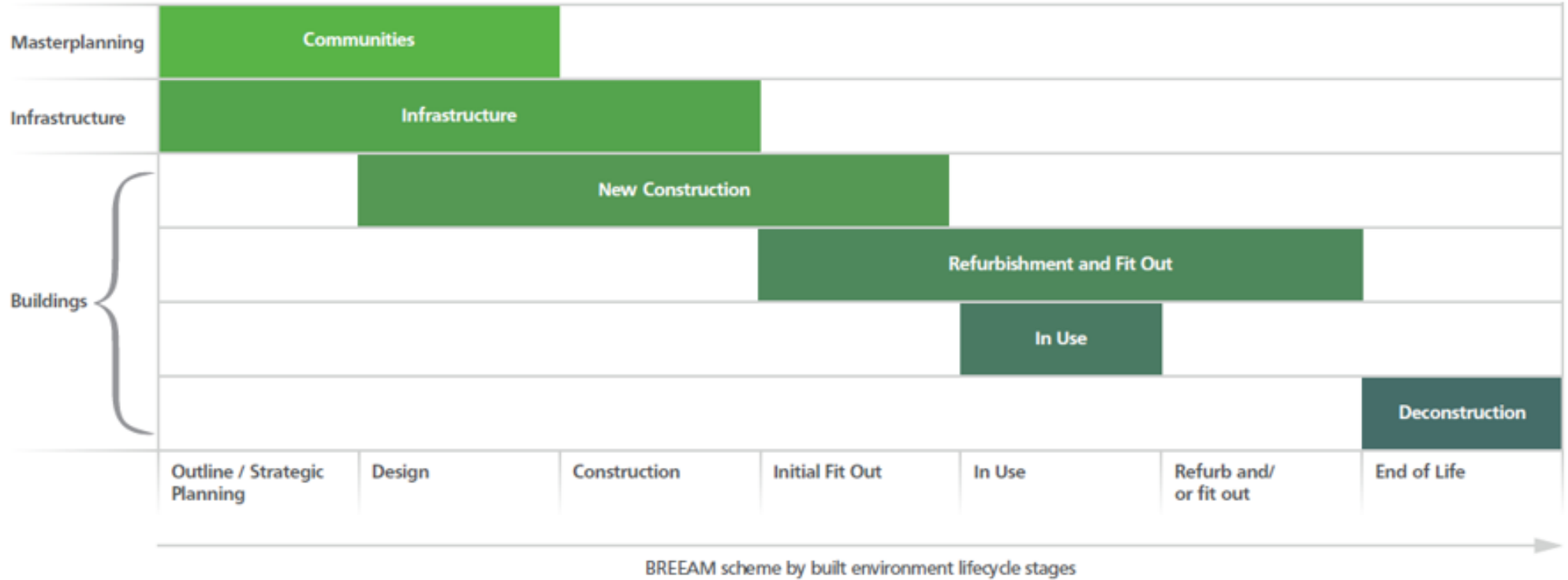
# BREEAM

HOME  
QUALITY  
MARK



# CEEQUAL®

Figure 1 - BREEAM scheme by built environment lifecycle stages



## 2. How do the schemes support national planning policy?

The schemes align to the ambitions of a numerous policy drivers within the [National Planning Policy Framework \(NPPF\) \(2019\)](#). The below table highlights the most relevant sections.

Table 1 - BREEAM alignment with the NPPF (2019)

Para.	What the NPPF states	BREEAM Alignment
20	<p>Strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for:</p> <p>a) housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;</p> <p>b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);</p> <p>c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and</p> <p>d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.</p>	<p>BREEAM schemes are holistic and drive performance across a range of sustainability aspects including climate resilience, energy performance and the embodied impacts of materials.</p> <p>They drive better water use management, public health and wellbeing, sustainable transport options, good waste management practices and natural environment and ecological protection and enhancements.</p> <p>BREEAM also supports the delivery of higher quality outcomes more generally across the built environment sector through the advocacy of better management and assurance procedures.</p>
129	<p>Local planning authorities should ensure that they have access to, and make appropriate use of, tools and processes for assessing and improving the design of development. These include workshops to engage the local community, design advice and</p>	<p>BREEAM is the longest standing sustainability assessment framework.</p>

	<p>review arrangements, and assessment frameworks such as Building for Life. These are of most benefit if used as early as possible in the evolution of schemes, and are particularly important for significant projects such as large scale housing and mixed use developments. In assessing applications, local planning authorities should have regard to the outcome from these processes...</p>	<p>It offers a range of systems and design tools which project teams and policy makers can use to improve and determine design and construction quality.</p> <p>These draw upon a range of industry best practices and credible, robust methodologies developed by BRE and which are therefore unique to BREEAM.</p>
<b>130</b>	<p>Local planning authorities should also seek to ensure that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, as a result of changes being made to the permitted scheme (for example through changes to approved details such as the materials used).</p>	<p>The final certification stages of most BREEAM schemes is based upon 'as built' evidence.</p> <p>As such, BREEAM helps ensure that the quality of approved development is not reduced at completion as it validates as-built performance.</p> <p>Additionally, the introduction of an Occupation Stage Assessment in the 2018 BREEAM UK New Construction scheme aims to take this a step further by confirming that the building performs as expected.</p>
<b>131</b>	<p>In determining applications, great weight should be given to outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability, or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings.</p>	<p>The fundamental principles of BREEAM are based upon raising standards of design and helping developers and other stakeholders show case their good credentials.</p> <p>All of the schemes' assessment criteria are flexible. Technology and design aesthetic agnostic; focusing on process and outcomes rather than solutions. As such, they have been applied across all local contexts; rural, urban, sensitive and everything in-between.</p>
<b>148</b>	<p>The planning system should support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change.</p>	<p>BREEAM was first developed in the wake of the energy crisis. As such, it has a strong legacy of tackling climate change head on.</p>

		<p>The criteria have evolved over time and today not only address carbon reduction and energy performance, but also embodied impacts, flood risk, water scarcity, overheating and climate adaptation and resilience more broadly.</p>
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### 3. What is the scope of each scheme?

- BREEAM Communities can be applied to medium or large mixed-use development (typically 100 units+) including new community and regeneration projects. It can also be applied to housing estates, retail and/or business parks.
- CEEQUAL is suitable for large civil engineering, infrastructure projects, but also landscaping and public realm improvements such as town centres, promenades and piers, and/or transport networks.
- BREEAM New Construction can assess non-domestic buildings such as offices, industrial, retail, education, healthcare, leisure, hospitality and more. It is also suitable for the assessment of residential buildings which don't fall under the scope of Home Quality Mark, namely multi-occupancy residential buildings such as care homes and student accommodation.
- Home Quality Mark is suitable for the assessment of self-contained dwellings and the associated communal facilities such as in apartments and high rises.
- BREEAM Refurbishment and Fit Out is suitable for assessing non-domestic buildings such as offices, industrial, retail, education, healthcare and more. It is

structured in modules and can assess the varying parts of a refurbishment project at any one time.

- BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment applies to the refurbishment of homes.
- The BREEAM In-Use International scheme can be used to assess the environmental performance of existing (in-use) non-domestic assets. For Parts 1 (Asset Performance) and 2 (Building Management) this is applicable to any non-domestic buildings which meet the necessary eligibility criteria. Part 3 (Occupier Management) is suitable for offices, retail (as pilot) and healthcare (as pilot). The In-Use standard is not applicable to residential projects at this time but is expected in the near future.

## 4. Which rating should be set?

This is a challenging question to answer. All ratings are better than the regulatory minimum and the final rating achievable will depend on the socio-economic context and localised, project specific conditions. As this will vary from place to place, any targets set should recognise what is achievable within the context of that place. Therefore, before considering setting a target for BREEAM, it is vital to establish a local evidence base and to undertake an assessment of viability to ensure any potential targets can be achieved.

To provide some context as to where the ratings are typically 'pitched' in respect to market practices, scheme ratings broadly represent performance equivalent to:

- Pass/1 Star: Top 75% of projects (standard good practice)
- Good/2 Star: Top 50% of projects (intermediate good practice)
- Very Good/3 Star: Top 25% of projects (advanced good practice)
- Excellent/4 Star: Top 10% of projects (best practice)
- Outstanding/5 Star: Less than the top 1% of projects (innovator)

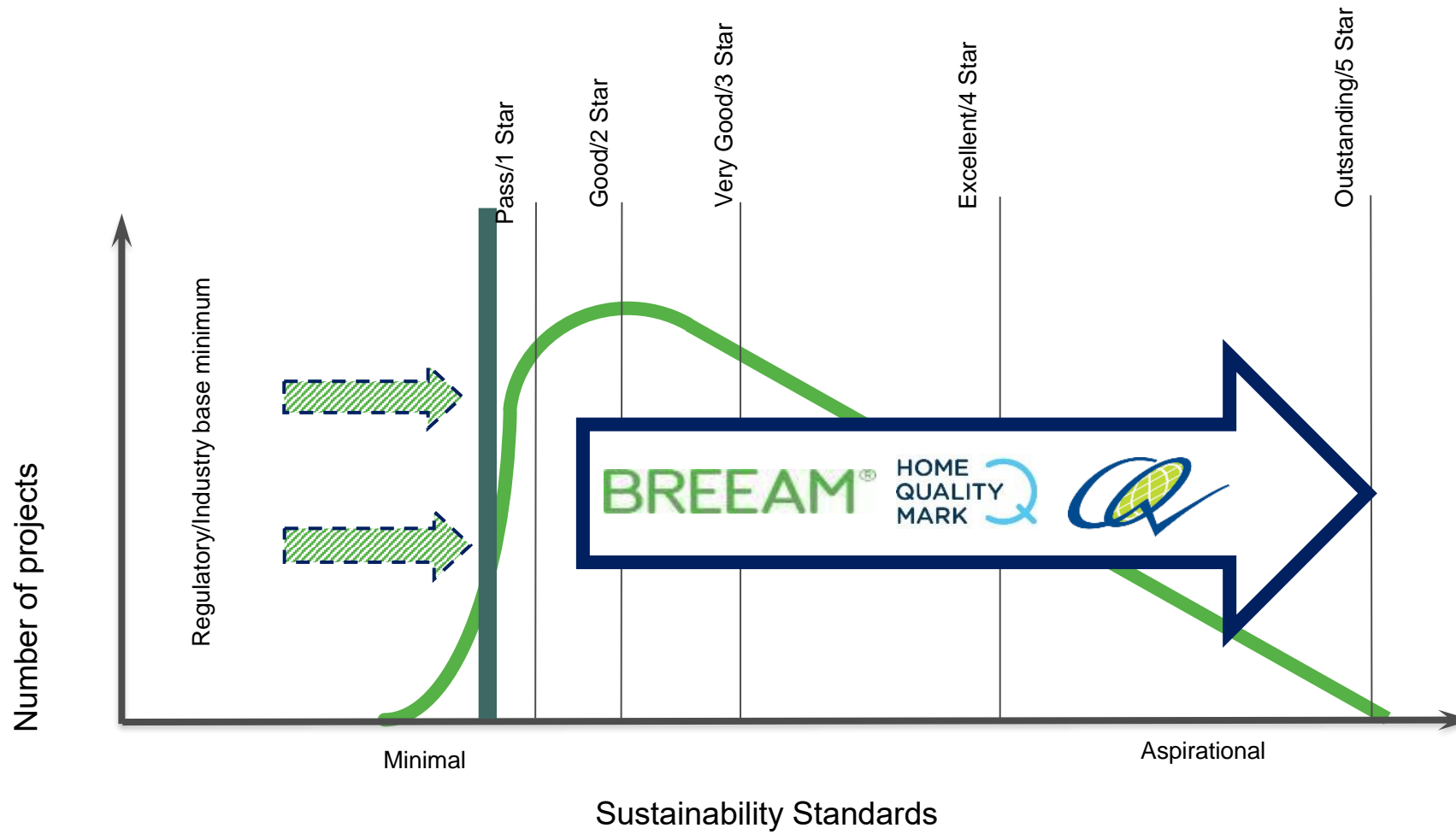
As a general benchmark though the most common targets set by policy makers are those comparatives to an Excellent/4 star, Very Good/3 star and Good/2 star whilst the most common rating achieved against the 2014 New construction

scheme has, to date, been a Very Good (nearly 70% of certified projects).

Outstanding and 5 star ratings are incredibly challenging and are unlikely to be suitable as a blanket policy.



Figure 2 – Conceptualised rating levels



**5. How should the schemes be referenced in local policy?**

It is common practice to support Strategic/Local Plan policies with Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) and other policy tools. While the BREEAM schemes could be highlighted in the SPD's, we recommend that any requirements for BREEAM schemes are clearly outlined in the main strategic/local plan. Where a condition to build to one of the BREEAM standards is not supported by the adopted Strategic/Local plan, it is more likely to be successfully challenged.

Table 2 provides a conceptual policy which could be incorporated into a local plan. The ratings in this example have been designed to be cumulatively more challenging to futureproof and drive advancing sustainability standards.

These suggestions should be adapted to each local plan, following on from an assessment of the local evidence base and a viability assessment.

*Table 2 - Conceptual policy suggestion*

Dev. Type	Scale	2020-2028	2029-2035
New Homes	10-200 dwellings	HQM 2 Stars	HQM 3 Stars
	>200 dwellings	HQM 3 stars OR HQM 2 star and level 4 on the Footprint Quality Indicator	
New and Refurbished Non-Residential	1,000-5,000m2	BREEAM Good	BREEAM Very Good
	>5,000m2	BREEAM NC/RFO Very Good	
New Communities	>200 dwellings	BREEAM Communities Very Good	
Residential Refurbishment	>10 dwellings	BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment Excellent	
Public realm	Major works	CEEQUAL Very Good	CEEQUAL Excellent

## **6. Which schemes are other Local Authorities using?**

The list below represents a sampled snap shot of the current policy landscape.

It is intended as a guide for those seeking further information and each authority has been hyperlinked to aid accessibility.

The intention is to regularly update and build on the insights gleaned. We welcome further contributions.

Table 3 – Which schemes are being used by Local Authorities

Planning Authority	Current or Emerging	Adoption Stage	Certification policy overview
<a href="#">Basildon</a>	Emerging	Draft	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#">Birmingham</a>	Current	Adopted 2017	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#">Camden</a>	Current	Adopted 2017	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Domestic Refurbishment, HQM
<a href="#">Canterbury</a>	Current	Adopted 2017	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#">Central Bedfordshire</a>	Emerging	Submitted Apr 2018	BREEAM: New Construction, HQM
<a href="#">Chelmsford</a>	Emerging	Submitted Jun 2018	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#">Cheshire East</a>	Current	Adopted 2017	BREEAM: New Construction and CEEQUAL
<a href="#">Colchester</a>	Emerging	Submitted Oct 2017	BREEAM: New Construction, HQM
<a href="#">Croydon</a>	Current	Adopted 2018	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Domestic Refurbishment,
<a href="#">Derby</a>	Current	Adopted 2017	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Communities
<a href="#">East Herts</a>	Current	Adopted 2018	BREEAM: HQM
<a href="#">Eastleigh</a>	Emerging	Submitted Nov 2018	BREEAM: New Construction and BREEAM: Communities
<a href="#">Greenwich</a>	Current	Adopted (updated) 2016	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Domestic Refurbishment, CEEQUAL
<a href="#">Harrogate</a>	Emerging	Submitted Aug 2018	BREEAM: New Construction, HQM
<a href="#">Havant</a>	Emerging	Draft	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Communities, HQM
<a href="#">Luton</a>	Current	Adopted 2017	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#">Maldon</a>	Current	Adopted 2017	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#">New Forest</a>	Emerging	Submitted Nov 2018	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#">Newham</a>	Emerging	Submitted Feb 2018	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Domestic Refurbishment, BREEAM Refurbishment and Fit Out

<a href="#"><u>North Devon and Torridge</u></a>	Current	Adopted 2018	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#"><u>Oxford</u></a>	Emerging	Draft	BREEAM: New Construction, HQM
<a href="#"><u>Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan</u></a>	Emerging	Submitted Jul 2017	BREEAM: New Construction (Plymouth only)
<a href="#"><u>Poole</u></a>	Current	Adopted 2018	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#"><u>Reading</u></a>	Emerging	Submitted Mar 2018	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#"><u>Richmond</u></a>	Current	Adopted 2018	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Domestic Refurbishment
<a href="#"><u>Sedgemoor</u></a>	Emerging	Submitted Aug 2018	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#"><u>South Cambridgeshire</u></a>	Current	Adopted 2018	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Refurbishment Fit Out, BREEAM: Communities
<a href="#"><u>Stockton</u></a>	Emerging	Submitted Dec 2017	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#"><u>Sutton</u></a>	Current	Adopted 2018	BREEAM: New Construction
<a href="#"><u>Tower Hamlets</u></a>	Emerging	Submitted Feb 2018	BREEAM: New Construction, BREEAM: Refurbishment Fit Out, HQM

*Last revised: 13/03/19*

## 7. What are the different roles of the BREEAM Professionals?

The roles of BREEAM Professionals:

- **The Licensed Assessor (or Verifier\*):** an individual with scheme specific training and experience. They register and undertake assessments of projects/assets, determine ratings and apply for certification based on the scheme license they hold. The Assessor/Verifier is involved throughout the different stages of assessment process – the earlier the better.
- **The Advisory Professional (AP):** an individual with a high level of general knowledge of scheme specific principles, requirements and processes. They have the skills and experience needed to inform, guide and facilitate project teams throughout the certification process. The AP can support stakeholders in obtaining maximum value and cost-effective performance throughout the project life, whilst managing risks and keeping performance on course.
- **The Associate:** An individual with a general understanding of the principles and processes of the scheme(s). Associates are generally a member of the project team and/or relevant stakeholder department and can apply their generalist knowledge before, during or after the assessment process.

\*In reference to CEEQUAL.

## 8. What are the stages and timings of the certification process?

The certification process for new construction and refurbishment projects involves several stages which correlate to the planning process as follows:

- **Pre-Assessment estimator:** Typically occurs during pre-application, outline and detailed planning discussions. It shows what rating the project has the potential to achieve typically based on available information, developer commitments and discussions with a BREEAM Assessor or AP. This is not a formal stage of certification.
- **Registration:** Typically, projects will be registered when outline and detailed planning are being approved. Once registered with BRE, the project is secured to the latest version of the applicable scheme.
- **Interim/design stage certification:** On most projects, the design stage certification will be issued during the early stages of construction. It is based largely on design stage evidence, specifications and contracts. Whilst optional, this stage ensures that the project is on track.
- **Final/Post Construction certification:** This certificate is typically issued 3-6 months post

project completion and is based on constructed, as built evidence. It provides the greater levels of assurance to policy makers.

When writing policy and conditions it is important that LPAs consider the typical certification timings.

The BREEAM in Use scheme and CEEQUAL have different certification processes, as highlighted in the respective resource packs and via their websites.

## **9. When will the BREEAM Refurbishment and In Use resource pack be available?**

The resource suite is intended as a living body of information. Following a series of engagement workshops during Spring/Summer 2019, the existing guidance's will be updated and relaunched alongside the Refurbishment and Fit Out and In Use resource packs, at the end of the year.

## **10. Where can I find more information?**

The Local Government resources, which accompany this piece, provide more detailed guidance on the above topics and more.

A wealth of other information is available via the resources sections of the [BREEAM website](#), [HQM website](#) and [CEEQUAL website](#).

Furthermore, certified projects, licensed Assessors and/or Accredited Professionals can be found via the [GreenBook Live](#).