

## What makes a BREEAM certified home better?

**BREEAM Domestic Refurbishment is an environmental rating system for housing refurbishment projects, providing a number of benefits to householders. The following summarises some of the features that set apart a home refurbishment certified to BREEAM.**



Up to  
**50% less**  
energy

**Lower energy bills:** An average 3-bedroom, semi-detached property brought up to the BREEAM 'Excellent' standard can save up to 50% on energy bills, with a potential cost saving of up to £1,000 a year<sup>1</sup>.

**Water savings:** A BREEAM 'Outstanding' home can use up to 36% less water than the average home in the UK. Typically, this can save a metered property £55 a year on average household water bills<sup>2</sup>.

**Reduced crime risk:** Achieving the security standards in the scheme issues can put your home at less of a risk from crime

**Reduced Impact from flooding:** BREEAM 'Excellent' and 'Outstanding' rated homes in flood-risk areas must ensure features are installed to make them more resilient to flooding. Whilst this won't prevent flooding, it can help to reduce the cost of repairing a home after a flood event.

**Greater comfort:** BREEAM certification ensures that the home is well ventilated, and encourages good daylighting, good sound insulation and the avoidance of harmful paints and varnishes (which contain volatile organic compounds).

**Responsible sourcing:** In the UK it is estimated that £650 million worth of illegally sourced timber is purchased each year<sup>3</sup>. Homes refurbished to the BREEAM standard only use legally sourced timber, and are also assessed for their use of other responsibly sourced and low impact materials.

**Considerate contractors:** Refurbishing a home to BREEAM standards rewards contractors that act in a responsible way, reducing noise, keeping the site clean and tidy and reducing disruption to neighbours.

**Reduced waste:** BREEAM rewards projects that have more than 70% of waste diverted from landfill.

**Improved quality:** BREEAM certified homes are all independently assessed by fully trained competent assessors, subject to strict quality assurance from BRE.

<sup>1</sup> Based on improving a 3-bedroom, semi-detached home from an EPC band D to an EPC band C, using SAP assessment cost assumptions. This represents the average EPC rating of homes in the UK, with semi-detached homes the most common house type, representing 26% of UK homes. Source: English House Condition Survey, 2010 – 2011, Department for Communities and Local Government.

<sup>2</sup> Based on achieving 3 credits under BREEAM Issue Wat 01, reducing average typical consumption from 150 litres/person/day to less than 95 litres/person/day. Average household bills for a metered property could be reduced by 36% pro rata from the average of £154 to £99 per year.  
[www.ofwat.gov.uk/consumerissues/chargesbills/prs\\_inf\\_charges2011-12.pdf](http://www.ofwat.gov.uk/consumerissues/chargesbills/prs_inf_charges2011-12.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> WWF UK, 2012 'Barking up the right tree',  
[www.wwf.org.uk/what\\_we\\_do/campaigning/what\\_wood\\_you\\_choose/](http://www.wwf.org.uk/what_we_do/campaigning/what_wood_you_choose/)

# Living the BREEAM lifestyle

According to the WWF, if everyone in the world lived like we do in the UK we would need almost three planet Earths to sustain us. This is a way of life that is threatening our natural environment, as well as the lives of millions of people around the world. But living in a sustainable home is not just about saving the planet; it also makes good economic sense, helping to reduce running costs so that you have more money to spend on the things that are important to you.

Of course, living in a BREEAM certified home does not automatically ensure improved sustainability and lower running costs. The sustainability features associated with meeting BREEAM standards will help you to live in a more sustainable and energy efficient way, but this also depends on your own actions. Here are some tips for reducing your environmental impacts and achieving your home's potential:

- Set the thermostat to 21 degrees or less. Reducing your thermostat by just 1 degree can cut your annual heating bills by as much as 10%.
- Ensure your hot water is not too hot; it should be set at 60°C or 120°F.
- Don't leave taps running whilst brushing teeth or when 'scrubbing up'.
- Get into the habit of turning off lights when you leave a room.
- Use a watering can rather than a hose to water the garden, and if you have one, use water from the water butt rather than the mains supply.
- Ensure you separate all your waste and recycle as much as you can; don't throw away valuable resources.
- Shower for 5 minutes or less and try turning off the shower while you lather up. This will save energy and water (and reduce queuing times for the bathroom).
- Use your energy and water meters (if provided) to set yourself weekly targets for using progressively less water and energy.
- Avoid filling the kettle with more water than you need, but ensure the element is sufficiently covered.

For further tips on reducing your environmental impacts, go to:

**Energy Saving Trust:** [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Take-action/Start-saving-money/Changing-your-habits-room-by-room](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Take-action/Start-saving-money/Changing-your-habits-room-by-room)

**Waterwise:** [www.waterwise.org.uk/pages/save-water.html](http://www.waterwise.org.uk/pages/save-water.html)

**WWF:** [www.wwf.org.uk/how\\_you\\_can\\_help/change\\_how\\_you\\_live/](http://www.wwf.org.uk/how_you_can_help/change_how_you_live/)

**Further information on BREEAM:** [www.breeam.org](http://www.breeam.org)

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# Up to 36% less water



# More than 70% of waste diverted from landfill

