

GUIDANCE NOTES

Produced by

Tendring District Council
Building Control Service



Electrical Installation and the Building Regulations

Approved Document P – A basic guide for homeowners, designers and builders

From the 1st January 2005 any new electrical wiring or electrical components for domestic premises or a small commercial premise linked to domestic accommodation, will be required to be designed and installed in accordance with the Building Regulations. As a homeowner, builder or designer you need to be aware of your responsibilities under the Building Regulations when new electrical wiring and components are installed.

So what do you have to do?

Non notifiable work – If the work is very minor (Table 1) in nature all you have to do is ensure that any electrical work is installed in accordance with manufacturers instructions, and is done in such a way that it is safe. If you are in any way unsure about how to install new wiring, electrical sockets etc, then get a qualified electrician.

Notifiable work – Where the work does not fall within Table 1, you have two methods of seeking approval. The best method is to ensure that electrical work is installed via a member of one of the competent person's schemes, at present these are;

- BRE Certification Ltd	Email: Tel:	enquiries@bre-certification.co.uk 01923 664100
- British Standards Institution	Email: Tel:	www.construction-index.com/Webbbristani.html 020 8996 9001
- ELECSA Limited	Email: Tel:	www.elecsa.org.uk 0870 749 0080
- Zurich Certification Limited	Email: Tel:	www.zuricheng.co.uk 01221 456 1311
- NICEIC Certification Services Ltd	Email: Tel:	www.niceic.org.uk freephone 0800 013 0900

Any member of the above organisations will be able to self certify their work complies with the relevant standards under the Building Regulations.

The Approving body will then notify us (The Local Building Control Body) that the work has been satisfactorily designed and installed and tested.

The Alternative method would be to submit either a Building Notice or Full Plans application for the works to your Local Authority.

What if the electrical work forms part of other building works or development?

The same process would apply if the installer of the electrical work is a member of one of the competent person's schemes. Their certificate would be fed into the Building Regulation Approval process. If the installer of the electrical work is not a member of a competent person's body then the Local Building Control Body will require a completed copy of the Electrical Installation Certificate.

What are the consequences of not obtaining approval?

- a. A Completion Certificate for the works (including the main development works if the electrical installation forms part of it, i.e. an extension) will not be issued. This may result in any future sale of the property from being compromised.
- b. Possible enforcement Action by this Local Authority for failure to comply with the Building Regulations.

As the owner, you need to ensure the works you are carrying out is either minor or notifiable work – if it is notifiable, make sure the persons carrying out the work are either registered under one of the schemes or that person carrying out the work will be able to certify their work under the Local Authority Building Control route.

As the designer you need to make sure you specify that the electrical work (if part of a general development scheme) will be designed, constructed and inspected and tested in accordance with the British Standard 7671 (The IEE Wiring Regulations) and will either fall under a competent persons scheme or the Local Authority Building Control Approval route.

As the Builder/developer you need to ensure that you have either electrical personnel who can either certify their work under one of the competent person's bodies or are qualified/experienced to enable them to sign off under the Electrical Installation Certification form.

Put simply the effect of this regulation will be that notifiable electrical work carried out by unqualified electricians will not be permitted unless a competent, qualified electrician is willing and able to provide a certificate to cover the work. We would strongly encourage the use of electricians who are part of a Competent Persons Scheme.

The following procedures will be used where Tendring District Council are required to enforce the Part P requirements, i.e. Work not carried out by a Part P registered electrician.

1. POLICY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- (a) It is the responsibility of those carrying out building work to ensure that the relevant provisions of Schedule 1 of the regulations are fully met. The role of Building Control in enforcing the regulations is to check that they do so.
- (b) Where Part P applies, requirement P1 clearly requires those carrying out work to ensure that -
“Reasonable provision is made for the design, installation, inspection and testing of electrical installations in order to protect persons from fire or injury”
- (c) This clearly places the responsibility on the person carrying out the work to ensure that inspection and testing of the electrical installation is carried out. Building Control Surveyors should therefore satisfy themselves that, where they consider it necessary, inspection and testing are actually done.
- (d) It should be noted at this point that BS7671 already requires that an “appropriate electrical installation certificate” be provided by the installer when works are complete. The process suggested by this document does no more therefore than requiring installers to do what they should already be doing anyway.
- (e) It is likely that three distinct “classes” of work will develop –
1. Works carried out by those registered under a competent persons scheme.
 2. Works carried out by competent electricians, who could be considered competent for the purposes of signing a BS 7671 electrical installation certificate - but who are not a member of a Competent Persons Scheme and hence cannot “self-certify” their own work.
 3. Works carried out by anyone else (DIY Etc) who cannot be considered competent to sign electrical installation certificates, and who would be advised to employ the services of someone who is appropriately qualified/experienced to provide an electrical installation certificate for their work. In the case of minor alterations building control surveyors will use their judgement to determine whether they require a certificate or could simply approve the work.

2. APPLICATION STAGE – BUILDING NOTICE APPLICATIONS

It is important that the new requirements of part P are drawn to the attention of applicants as early as possible in the process. To achieve this the standard wording on the acceptance sent out will be amended to include the following information to applicants -

All electrical work required to meet the requirements of Part P (Electrical Safety) must be designed, installed, inspected and tested by a person competent to do so.

Prior to completion the Council should be satisfied that Part P has been complied with. This may require an appropriate BS 7671 electrical installation certificate to be issued for the work by a person competent to do so.

3. APPLICATION STAGE - FULL PLANS APPLICATIONS

a) Where a full plans application is made, it will normally be acceptable for applicants to provide a standard note on plan which reads as follows –

All electrical work required to meet the requirements of Part P (Electrical Safety) must be designed, installed, inspected and tested by a person competent to do so.

Prior to completion the Council should be satisfied that Part P has been complied with. This may require an appropriate BS 7671 electrical installation certificate to be issued for the work by a person competent to do so.

4. COMPLIANCE WITH REQUIREMENT P2

- (a) The electrical installation certificate required in both the above cases will also normally include all the details necessary to identify and give details of each circuit.
- (b) The person signing the certificate will also ensure that all appropriate notices required by BS 7671 (for example, those warning of differing wiring colours) are correctly provided and fixed.

Provided the information in (a) and (b) is provided, electrical installation diagrams should not normally be necessary. In cases where the works are of unusual complexity (perhaps in mixed use developments for example), the right to require such diagrams will remain at the discretion of the Building Control Surveyor.

5. DURING THE PROGRESS OF WORKS

- a) An inspection should be carried out at first fix stage by a Building Control Surveyor.
- b) Persons carrying out the building work should be reminded that failure to notify this inspection stage may lead to delay in issuing a completion certificate later.

- c) Where the Building Control surveyor has reliable prior knowledge that the electrical installation is to be carried out under a competent persons scheme, this inspection stage could be omitted. Given the normal progress of works on domestic applications however, it is likely that this inspection will be the first reliable opportunity available to the Building Control surveyor to find out with certainty the “status” of the person carrying out the electrical installation.
- d) The first task to be accomplished during the inspection should therefore be to ascertain if the installer is –
- e) Working under a Competent Persons Scheme.
- f) A competent electrician/installer who will be providing an appropriate BS 7671 electrical installation certificate for the work.
- g) A person unable to demonstrate the required competence who may, in certain circumstances, need to employ someone else to provide an electrical installation certificate for the work.
- (h) Once this has been established, the approach of the Building Control Surveyor will be slightly different in each case -

Installers working under a Competent Persons Scheme

- As the installer can self-certify the electrical work, it should not be necessary for the Building Control surveyor to undertake a detailed visual inspection of the electrical work. The opportunity should be taken however to ensure all requirements other than Part P have been complied with.
- Before leaving the site, the applicant/ installer should be reminded that the Building Control Surveyor will need to see a copy of the electrical installation certificate for the work prior to issuing a completion notice. The electrician must supply the certificate to the owner prior to leaving site

Installers competent to sign a BS7671 electrical installation certificate.

- In this case the Building Control Surveyor should make a visual inspection of the electrical work in accordance with the checklist (see appendix (a)) and record the findings to be kept with the inspection record.
- Before leaving the site, the applicant/ installer should be reminded that the Building Control Surveyor will need to see a copy of the electrical installation certificate for the work prior to issuing a completion notice.
- The industry has agreed to provide a list to assist us in determining those electricians/installers competent to sign BS7671 certificates. This will be made available at www.labc-services.co.uk .

In all other cases

- The Building Control Surveyor should make a visual inspection of the electrical work in accordance with the checklist (see appendix (a)) and record the findings.

Before leaving the site, the provision of an electrical installation certificate should be discussed with the person carrying out the work. They should be reminded of the requirement to provide a suitable electrical installation certificate, and advised to

contact a competent electrician/installer to discuss what is required prior to covering up the work. It is likely that any electrician/installer willing to provide a BS 7671 certificate will need to see the wiring both at first fix stage and on completion.

- Where the work is of a minor nature, the Building Control Surveyor may decide to accept the installation without requiring an electrical installation certificate. This would help to encourage those who may otherwise be put off from making an application at all because the total costs of inspection and testing are disproportionate to the scale of work carried out. This option must remain at the discretion of the Building Control Surveyor, who must be satisfied that the installation is safe, and that requiring an electrical installation certificate would impose an unreasonable burden on the applicant.

Notes

- Any unsatisfactory electrical work which is seen during any inspection should be corrected and re-inspected before being covered up. This would apply to all installers – even those who are members of Competent Persons Schemes. Note that the local authority retains its powers under Section 35 and 36 of the Building Act 1984 in all cases.
 - Where the electrical work forms part of a larger scheme which is itself subject to Building Regulations control, a minor works electrical installation certificate is required, even if the work is of a type which would not require notification if carried out on its own – (but see above)
- (a) At completion stage, the Building Control Surveyor will ask to see a copy of the electrical installation certificate. It is suggested that in most cases it would be simplest for the applicant to provide Building Control with a copy of the certificate (although they are under no official obligation to do so).
 - (b) Where the work is carried out under a Competent Persons Scheme, it is still the responsibility of the installer to provide the owner with an appropriate BS7671 electrical installation certificate before leaving the site. This is the certificate which should be required by the Building Control Surveyor and not the notification which will be sent to the local authority by the scheme provider, which may not be available until 30 days after completion.
 - (c) Normally this certificate will be all that is required from the installer to demonstrate compliance with Requirement P1 and P2 provided;
 1. The schedule to the electrical installation certificate has been completed and includes details of each circuit.
 2. All notices required by BS 7671 have been provided.
 - (d) Only in circumstances where the work is of an unusual or complex nature would it be necessary for schematic “as built” circuit diagrams to be provided – but this would be a matter for the discretion of the Building Control Surveyor, and would normally have been noted at application stage e.g. mixed use development
 - (e) A Completion Certificate should not be issued until the Building Control Surveyor is satisfied that Part P has been complied with and that an appropriate electrical installation certificate has been issued where required.

6. Enforcement.

Where an electrical installation certificate is not provided

- (a) It is for the person carrying out the building works to demonstrate that requirements P1 and P2 have been complied with and the provision of a BS 7671 electrical installation certificate is the most appropriate way to do this. If a certificate is not provided therefore, it may become an enforcement matter.
- (b) All enforcement action must be proportionate, and decisions taken must be in line with the Councils enforcement policy document.
- (c) Where the works involved are of a minor nature, consideration should again be given to accepting the work without pursuing the requirement for an electrical installation certificate .
- (d) It may be necessary for the Authority to arrange for the installation to be tested by a competent electrician to determine if the work is satisfactory or not. Should faults be identified a notice could be served under Section 36 of the Building Act.
- (e) It may not be possible at this stage for an electrician to give a normal electrical installation certificate, as they will normally only do so where they have been given the opportunity to see the work at first fix stage. In these circumstances a Periodic Inspection Report should be requested as this, taken together with the Building Control surveyors record of inspection at first fix stage, should be sufficient to establish if the installation is satisfactory or not.

Where the Authority knows the electrical installation to be faulty.

- (a) Where the Authority is aware of a fault in the electrical installation which may affect life safety, and which cannot be resolved by other means, formal enforcement action must always be taken to protect the occupiers.
- (b) Refusal to issue a completion certificate is not a satisfactory option in such cases.
- (c) If such action is taken in relation to work carried out under a Competent Persons Scheme, the scheme provider should also be informed.

7. Regularisation Certificate Applications

- (a) It must be remembered that the responsibility for demonstrating that the work complies with Part P lies squarely with the person requesting the regularisation certificate, and the Authority is under no obligation to issue a certificate until satisfied on that point.
- (b) The applicant should be asked if an electrical installation certificate was issued at the time the work was carried out. If not, a Periodic Inspection Report may be considered as a way of showing compliance together with appropriate exposure/tracing of the cables as considered necessary.

8. Fee implications

When calculating the fees please see Table B Line B14.

9. Transitional Procedures.

The criteria to be used in determining whether Part P will be applicable to a project are as follows.

- a) If a Building Regulations Approval was issued or work had started on site BEFORE 31st December 2004 compliance with Part P (and this document) will not be necessary. This will involve works commencing for the next 3 years.
- b) If an order was placed for the electrical works BEFORE 31st December 2004 AND the work is carried out before 31st March 2005, compliance with Part P will not be necessary.
- c) Any application submitted but not determined or started before 31st December 2004 will have to comply with Part P.
- d) Any works carried out after 1st January 2005 which would not previously have attracted a Building regulations application will need to comply with Part P (but see above).

**For More Information please call
Tendring Building Control
01255 686111**

**or alternatively call into our offices in Thorpe Road
Weeley.**

Other guidance leaflets can be downloaded using the following link:

[Click here for the Building Control Homepage](http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/TendringDC/Environment/Planning+and+Buildings/Building+Control/)

<http://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/TendringDC/Environment/Planning+and+Buildings/Building+Control/>

To notify or not, that is the question?

Except as identified in the chart below, notification of proposals to carry out electrical installation will be given to a building control body before work begins, unless the work is undertaken by a person registered with a Part P self certification scheme.

Whether or not work is notifiable is dependant on the nature of installation work proposed and its location within a dwelling. The location is important because some 'special installations or locations', such as kitchens and bathrooms, may pose a greater risk to people.

Examples of work	Notifiable?	
	Areas outside of bath/ shower rooms and kitchens	Within a bath/shower room or kitchen (special location)
Complete new/rewire of installation	Yes	Yes
Consumer unit change	Yes	Yes
Installing a new shower circuit	Yes	Yes
Installing an additional socket	No	Yes
Installing an additional light	No	Yes
Addition of fused connection unit to ring final circuit	No	Yes
Installing a new cooker circuit	Yes	Yes
Connecting a cooker to an existing connection unit	No	No
Installing or upgrading main or supplementary equipotential bonding	No	Yes
Replacing a damaged cable for a single circuit	No	No
Replacing a damaged socket outlet	No	No
Replacing a light fitting	No	No
Installation and fit of a storage heater, including final circuit	Yes	Yes
Fit and final connection of storage heater	No	No
Installing extra low voltage lighting (not CE marked sets)	Yes	Yes
Taking a new supply out to a garden shed	Yes	N/A
Installing a socket in a garden shed	Yes	N/A
Installing a light fitting in a greenhouse	Yes	N/A
Installing a pond pump, including supply	Yes	N/A
Installing a hot air sauna	Yes	Yes
Installing a solar photovoltaic power supply	Yes	Yes
Installing ceiling or floor heating	Yes	Yes
Installing a small scale generator	Yes	Yes
Installing an additional socket in a motor caravan	N/A	N/A