



PRESS RELEASE

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DQI Online – How well is your building designed?

The CIC with support from CABE, OGC and SFfC have today publicly launched the much anticipated **DQI Online**, the easy to use web based version of the Design Quality Indicator. It has been developed to allow everyone involved in the procurement and use of buildings to evaluate the inherent design quality. The DQI can be used at all key stages of the construction process, to set and then continually monitor the aspirations for design.

The importance of design quality is evident in the current climate of change within the industry. Design quality was highlighted in Sir John Egan's Strategic Forum for Construction report '*Accelerating Change*' as a major industry cross cutting issues (*note1*). The current Chairman of the SFfC Peter Rogers has gone further and declared that use of **DQI** as one of the five major headline targets by which the industry's ongoing performance should be judged between 2004 and 2007.

The DQI tool has been developed using the best intelligence from clients, industry and Government on the issue of design quality, and how to assess the inherent value design can add to buildings. Over the past 14 months feedback has been obtained from 86 organisations who have used a paper based version of the tool during the Trailblazing scheme (*note2*). During which over 1000 people completed the DQI, of which a third were end users of projects.

DQI Online is straight forward to initiate and easy for respondents to use. The results are obtained instantly and are visualised graphically to help facilitate discussion about project aspirations, and the extent to which they have been met. The tool operates on a pay as you go basis, so it can be used as often as needed.

The long term aim of the DQI is to influence best practise by harvesting data from the accumulated DQI returns and relate it to the practices undertaken during the procurement process. We should be able to see and learn from patterns of success by examining the data longitudinally – e.g. by comparing sets of post occupancy evaluations with briefing and with design stage evaluations.

The aim for the DQI over the next 4 years is to become a self-funding tool, used on the majority of projects to help with the delivery of better quality buildings for clients, users and the public.

Peter Gershon, Chief Executive, Office of Government Commerce (OGC)

"OGC has supported the work on design quality indicators from the very beginning, because central government is committed to creating better public buildings and design quality has an important role to play in achieving that. Government projects have already benefited from the DQI tool through their 'Trailblazers'."

Stuart Henderson, Deputy Chairman, Construction Industry Council (CIC)

"CIC is fully committed to design quality, as good design can optimise the resources deployed in any construction project adding value to buildings. Since CIC initiated the DQI in 1999 we have drawn upon a wealth of experience in developing the DQI tool - utilising the best intelligence from clients, the industry and Government on the issue of design quality and how to assess the inherent value good design can add to buildings. All of this knowledge has been assimilated to form this excellent practical tool, DQI Online. We would especially like to thank all the Trailblazers for their invaluable input into the latest phase of the tool's development."

Paul Finch, Deputy Chairman, Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE)

"CABE has been more than happy to support this initiative, since it helps the assessment of design in a constructive way, acknowledging that there are qualitative aspects capable of objective evaluation. This acknowledgement of the fundamental importance of design to successful construction projects is most welcome."

Peter Rogers, Chairman, Strategic Forum for Construction

"The quality and sustainability of the built environment is fundamental to the success of this country and I'm sure that the industry will quickly come to recognise the DQI as an essential tool for achieving this. The Strategic Forum for Construction fully supports and wishes to encourage wider usage of the tool. In fact one of the key headline targets for the Forum is for 500 projects to have used the DQI by the end of 2004. By 2007 we are optimistic that usage will have expanded to 60% of all publicly funded projects. As the largest client group it is crucial that Government demonstrates its commitment to this type of innovation.'

DQI Online can be found at www.dqi.org.uk .

THE END

Notes to the editor

- 1)** 'Accelerating Change – A report by the Strategic Forum for Construction Chaired by John Egan', was published by Rethinking Construction in September 2002

- 2)** The Trailblazing scheme was launched in July 2002, and was the first opportunity for organisations and companies to use the Design Quality Indicators. The launch of DQI Online marks the end of the Trailblazing scheme.

- 3)** CIC is the representative forum for the professional bodies, research organisations and specialist trade association in the construction industry. It provides a single voice for professional in all sectors of the built environment through its collective membership of 500,000 individual professionals and 25,000 firms of construction consultants.

- 4)** The Office of Government Commerce (OGC) is an office of HM Treasury which works with central civil Government as a catalyst to achieve best value for money in commercial activities. Design quality is a key element of OGC's Achieving Excellence in Construction initiative, which aims to make the central government sector a more efficient client of the construction industry.

- 5)** CABI champions the creation of great buildings and public spaces. It is a non-departmental public body set up by the Government in 1999. Through public campaigns and support to professionals, CABI encourages the development of well-designed homes, streets, parks, offices, schools, hospitals and other public buildings - www.cabi.org.uk

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