

HIPs go ahead but public uncertain

Now that today's attempt in the Commons to derail the Home Information Pack has failed, attention must turn to educating the public. A new survey reveals that, although the Pack is only a few days away, people are very unclear about what it should contain.

The poll, conducted by gas-elec, the national safety inspection group, revealed that most people realise that the HIP will contain title documents and searches. But when it comes to the rest of the contents, more get it wrong than right.

65% are expecting the HIP to definitely include a Home Condition Report (now only "recommended" by the government); over 52% believe it will contain a structural survey (never required); 61% also think it must include a survey of the state of the electrics, 59% a survey of the gas installations, and 53% a survey of the plumbing – none of which are compulsory for the seller to include as standard.

Respondents are more aware of the Energy Performance Certificate - 79% know that the HIP must have one. But the confusion continues over what exactly constitutes a bad or good rating; 49% believe a 'C' rating is average (in fact the average property in the UK is in bands D-E), with a further 26% thinking a 'C' rating is bad, and another 24% admitting they don't know.

Finally, do the public agree that the HIP will be good for the housing market? A resounding 62% said no.

"It is clear from our survey that the public has been very confused by the HIP so far, " says John Davidson, managing director of the

gas-elec group, "and will need to be educated as to its purpose, its content and how it will impact on them when they come to buy and sell their next home."

EDITOR'S NOTES

**The survey was completed by members of the public visiting the company's website www.gas-elec.co.uk from April 4 – 31st 2007.*

Gas-elec Safety Systems is an independent company, providing impartial safety inspections without any vested interest (e.g. selling boilers) although the company does carry out remedial works on request. Its unique inspection service enables it to provide property professionals and householders with multiple inspections of gas, electrics, plumbing and central heating in just one visit. Founded in 1996, it has over 120 engineers who carry out over 100,000 inspections in domestic households throughout the UK each year.

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