

**CDB Consulting Engineers Limited**

Mechanical, Electrical & Public Health Design Engineers  
4th Floor, 59 Piccadilly, Manchester, M1 2AQ

M & E Project Managers  
<http://www.cdbconsulting.co.uk>  
TEL : 0845 074 0763  
FAX : 0845 074 0764



# NEWSLETTER

## UK construction market forecasts for 2011



The impact of UK government spending cuts and continued concerns over access to finance saw sentiment in the construction industry turn increasingly negative during the third quarter of 2010, according to the latest UK Construction Market Survey from RICS (the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors).

It found that 59% of chartered surveyors reported there had been no movement in construction workloads during the quarter.

Of those who did see an adjustment, it was downwards, with 10% more surveyors reporting that workloads fell rather than increased.

Insufficient funding for new developments and continued concerns over the economy were among the factors cited as affecting construction projects.

Significantly, surveyor sentiment was negative for all sectors of the construction industry. RICS said it was perhaps unsurprising in light of government spending cuts, that the worst affected areas were public housing and other public works, with negative net balances of -32 and -23 respectively.

Sentiment over public housing workloads is now at its lowest level since the survey began in 1994.

Meanwhile, a substantial majority of surveyors continue to expect profits to fall further over the next 12 months.

### CDB Consulting Engineers Operate in the following Sectors

- BUILDING SERVICES
- NUCLEAR
- OIL & GAS
- RETAIL
- COMMERCIAL
- INDUSTRIAL
- RESIDENTIAL

### Inside this issue:

- New body may oversee local house building regulations **2**
- Health & Safety Matters **2**
- House building to stagnate after 30% rise in 2010 **3**
- Editors Comments **3**
- CDB Consulting Engineers information **4**

### RECRUITMENT and EMPLOYMENT CONFEDERATION

The UK's contractor workforce is likely to experience a noticeable increase in demand for their skills, according to a new report from the Recruitment and Employment Confederation (REC).

The REC's latest Jobs Outlook detects "encouraging signs" for contract jobs in the next few months, despite the fact that many businesses began 2011 on a "cautious note." This was forecast in an earlier study by the REC and KPMG, which suggested that the start of 2011 could prove "challenging" for job seekers in the contracting community and elsewhere, as companies waited to see the effects of public sector cuts and the January rise in VAT on business.

However, the Jobs Outlook suggests that many businesses are now planning to recruit additional staff throughout 2011. It appears that talk of a double-dip recession as a result of the government's deficit reduction programme was overstated, as firms appear to be more confident than feared. 95 per cent of the employers polled said they were planning to either grow or maintain their permanent workforces at current levels

## New body may oversee local house building regulations



The government is proposing a new body to look after a raft of local construction standards that house builders will have to meet.

In a move which has surprised the sector, housing minister Grant Shapps and communities department officials have circulated draft proposals for a new system of local regulation of house building.

Building understands that this includes getting up an “independent body” to develop, own and maintain an approved menu of local standards.

This is despite the coalition government’s policy of culling as many quango’s as possible and its stated aim of vastly reducing red tape for house builders.

A government spokeswoman refused to comment in detail but denied it is considering setting up a quango.

In November, Shapps said he would drop Homes and Communities Agency proposals for unified standards for publicly funded homes in favour of a menu of options.

Local councils will be able to choose which options to enforce.

However, Shapps has said he wants the industry to help inform how the new system will work.

This is a key issue for house builders, who claim the additional imposition of local regulations, such as councils requiring houses to meet the Lifetime Homes standard or include on-site renewable energy, is making many housing sites economically unviable.

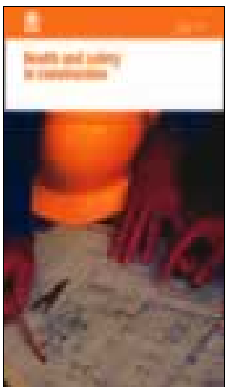
The government is seeking industry opinion on how an overseeing body might be funded, as well as whether the “menu” concept would work.

Some house builders are thought to fear the idea could add to the burden of regulation.

John Slaughter, policy director at the Home Builders Federation, reportedly said: that they are willing to look further into a menu approach, that they don’t believe this is the only way to take this issue forward.”

House builders want the government to force councils to examine the impact of every regulation they introduce upon the viability of housing development.

*REMEMBER ,  
ALWAYS, Health  
and Safety in  
Construction  
LEAST WE  
FORGET*



Please reflect on any current legislation and industry-recognised

examples of advanced good practice. Recognise healthy and safety on-site – from general building to specific refurbishment, repair, maintenance or M & E engineering works –

The need to especially focuses on hazards and control risks, “its not just all Tosh and paperwork”  
SAFETY MATTERS

## Health and safety in construction

## House building to stagnate after 30% rise in 2010

The number of new homes started rose by a third in 2010, bouncing back from record industry lows in 2009, according to the latest NHBC figures.

However, the number of homes on which construction was completed fell by just over 10% in the year, as house builders reacted to a tentative market.

Provisional figures from the NHBC, which provides warranties for the majority of new homes built in the UK, reveal that just over 115,000 homes were started in 2010, compared with 88,100 in 2009. The draft figures for December, if confirmed, appear to corroborate evidence of a stronger end to the year since the uncertainty around the Comprehensive Spending Review was resolved.

Richard Tamayo, commercial director at the NHBC, said 7,500 homes look set to have been registered in December, up on the 7,100 recorded in the same month last year. Completions are likely to run at about 9,100, down on last December, making the year end figure for completions about 104,000. This compares with completions of 116,300 homes in 2009.

Tamayo said: "The registration figures look very strong compared to 2009, but then 2009 was a disaster, the industry had to bounce back a little. Unfortunately the promise of the spring was never fulfilled as uncertainty after the election and the continuing lack of mortgage availability took its toll.

"We've had a whiff of hope in the final quarter and things are now delicately poised."

Tamayo said he expected starts to remain level or fall slightly in 2011, with completions likely to rise slightly.

The NHBC's confirmed figures for November are published for the first time

They come amid forecasts of further small falls in house prices in 2011.

Housing minister Grant Shapps this week intervened to attempt to stave off further swingeing regulation of the mortgage lending market by the Financial Services Authority. He met FSA chief executive Hector Sants to try to water down proposals that could further halve the availability of mortgages.



Richard Tamayo

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*It might not be all  
doom and gloom,*

*with positive thinking,  
active marketing  
and the need to keep  
the Clients  
requirements to the  
foremost of our  
thoughts, we may all  
look at profiting in  
2011 and succeeding  
thereafter*

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Have a break, once in  
a while,  
We at CDB encourage  
the 5 min rule every  
hour away from that  
computer screen

## Message from the Editor

Welcome to our first edition of our  
company newsletter

In the coming months we will try to  
focus on current events and the  
current mood as we see the  
M & E Construction Industry

Have a Safe and prosperous New  
Year

Clive D Briggs

If tackling stress was as easy as popping bubble wrap or doodling, work related stress would not be one of the main causes of absence in UK businesses, but every year nearly half a million people report being made ill by stress at work

You need to be happy in your work

A happy employee, is a productive employee

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*CDB consulting engineers is a new consultancy, with a team of engineers, the main parties who have been working within the building services industry each for over 30 years.*

## **OUR Organization**

*We all have a wide ranging experience across all types of building design which includes offices, retail, residential, schools, hospitals and all types of Industrial buildings*

*We are working towards being in close partnership with our clients, design and contract team, offering advice from conceptual consultation through to full system design to ensure high-performance.*

*Having a wide experience, our personal and professional approach we offer to assist Architects, Developers, Main Contractors Local Council's and Health Authorities etc.*

*CDB Consulting will deliver a complete range of mechanical and electrical services from industrial engineering to HVAC, hot and cold water services, public health engineering, network distribution, power and lighting control.*

*Other services include fire protection, security systems, voice and data communications technologies, as well as consultations and services that focuses on energy efficiency.*

*CDB Consultants aim to provide optimal solutions that meet the requirements of the building and the client, recognizing the importance of energy efficiency and cost management*

*Please feel free to visit our website where more information is available and do not hesitate to contact us for a more personal and professional approach to M & E building designs.*

## MATTERS TO KEEP OUR EYE ON

With reports coming in of fewer public sector job losses than expected and easing of credit for SMEs, is the economy starting to turn a corner?

## Default retirement age to go

The UK government has now confirmed that it will remove the Default Retirement Age (DRA).

Ministers have decided to proceed with their plan to phase out the DRA between 6 April and 1 October 2011.



<http://www.cdbconsulting.co.uk>

Is it the End of the CREDIT SQUEEZE , High Bank Bonuses and return a to Mortgage Lending ?