



**A new British Standard for the installation of draughtproofing looks set to give a major boost to the UK market**

# Standards to keep out the draught

It's been a long time coming. But, after years of lobbying from the Draught Proofing Advisory Association Ltd (DPAA), the first British Standard Code of Practice for the installation of draught proofing, BS 7880, has been published.

It describes the correct selection, installation, fitting and maintenance of draughtstrip materials "to ensure maximum effectiveness and lifespan".

Although the new document applies only to the housing sector, the DPAA reveals that the British Standards Institute has given approval for a new standard for the industrial/commercial market - *Specification for Draughtstrips of Industrial, Commercial and Public Buildings*. DPAA chairman Mike Humphries claims the market will expand from £15 million to £20 million when the specifications are put into practice.

"There are two fundamental requirements of a draughtstrip," explains

Humphries. "The first requirement is that it should be flexible enough to maintain contact with the opposing face ensuring a good seal whilst accommodating changes in the gap size of the door and window, which are due to seasonal movement.

"The second requirement is that the fitting of draughtstrips does not cause an increase in the operational force resulting in difficulty in opening and closing the door or windows.

"Correct fitting of draughtstrips will ensure maximum performance of the seal over its working life, combined with the minimum effect of the door or windows operation."

He points out that draughtstrips which are incorrectly fitted by being over compressed result in very high closing forces to the opening elements and limited life span of the seal.

**"T**he purpose of the new Code of Practice is to ensure the most

◀ **Over 350 windows have been repainted and draughtstripped at County Hall in Kingston upon Thames, Surrey**

suitable materials are used and correctly fitted to ensure maximum working life, but more importantly, ensures that the safety of the occupants is not compromised," says Humphries.

David Geraghty, DPAA vice-chairman stresses that particular attention is needed to maintain an adequate air supply to combustion appliances, if draught control is to be both safe and effective. "On average, perimeter gaps around doors and windows account for about 16 per cent of the total area of ventilation openings in dwellings.

"Only rarely do these gaps account for more than 50 per cent of the total area in individual dwellings, so fitting of draughtstrips, or the application of sealants, can significantly reduce ventilation, but will rarely eliminate it."

The new Code offers practical guidance on the fitting of draughtstrips and sealants in buildings with open-flued space heating appliances and for flueless domestic gas appliances.

A spillage test is included to determine that products of combustion are still effectively removed by the flue after draughtproofing has been fitted.

Humphries reports that many environmentally conscious organisations and local authorities are using draught proofing to increase profits and reduce running costs. Surrey County Council, which, as part of a refurbishment programme, carried out a major draught proofing programme at County Hall, Kingston. Following the external painting of the building - and removal of the 1970s draught proofing from the sash windows - new draught proofing was applied.

The project was carried out in two phases. In 1995, 244 windows were painted and draught proofed followed by 131 windows the following year. The contracts involved the application of Kleeneze Sealtech's brush edge seal in white plastic carrier externally and pile edge seal, also in white plastic carrier, internally.

The old draught proofing was said to be brittle and not functioning properly, particularly where the windows had warped. The new draught proofing takes up this disfiguration, thus eliminating further draughts. **EIBI**