

January 1990

Contents	pages
Conferences & seminars	2
Newsround	3
Product news	21
ETSU report	27
BRECSU report	28
Degree day tables	30

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'Energy Management' is published by the Information Division of the Department of Energy:-

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Room 341,  
1 Palace Street,  
London, SW1E 5HE.  
Telephone: 01-238 3471/2  
Circulation: 01-238 3375

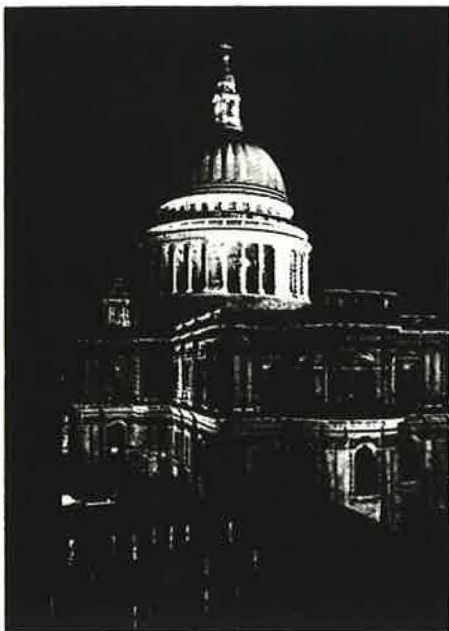
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The new floodlighting for St Paul's Cathedral was revealed on 18 December 1989 and funded by the Corporation of London - see page 12.



Energy Secretary John Wakeham (centre right) opens the first Superspec home with Bill Musanif (left), Phil Johnson (centre left) and Cliff Gill (right).

Energy Secretary John Wakeham has congratulated Wimpey for insulating their new Superspec homes to standards beyond the 1990 Building Regulations.

Speaking at the opening of the first of these energy efficient homes at Colonia Park, Colchester, Mr Wakeham stressed the importance of energy efficiency in the modern world:

'Saving energy is vital, not only because it saves industry and the consumer money and conserves precious finite energy resources, but also because it offers one of the most effective means of reducing environmental pollution and the threat of global warming. For me the really exciting thing about the current project is that it demonstrates clearly that one of the country's leading housebuilders recognises that a sharp improvement in energy efficiency is becoming an increasingly important factor both in the future of its own housing business and, by implication, in the future of the construction industry itself.'

The Superspec house is the result of a joint project between Wimpey Homes and BRECSU (the Building Research Energy Conservation Support Unit), part-funded by the Energy Efficiency Office of the Department of Energy.

The house is considerably more energy efficient than required even by the 1990 Building Regulations. The designs use proven building techniques and there are no compromises on internal layout or accommodation. The selling price is about 1.5 per cent more than the same house built to the current Building Regulation standards, but likely to be well below 1 per cent compared to houses

built to meet the 1990 Regulations.

The outward appearance of the three-bedroomed Superspec house is similar to other Wimpey homes but has the benefit of 100mm cavity wall insulation, 50mm of floor insulation and 150mm of loft insulation. The windows are double glazed, external doors are insulated and have weather stripped seals. The ventilation is controlled to help achieve greater comfort and a smaller than normal boiler needs an output of only 2.5kW. The standard high-pressure air test shows the house to have a leakage rate of only seven air changes per hour. Hot water for the taps comes directly from the mains and so there is no need for a cold water tank or plumbing under the roof.

Ken Maynard, Technical Manager for Wimpey Homes, told *Energy Management*:

'Instant savings will be immediately recoupable and the projections are that based on calculation, heating bills should be reduced by 40 per cent. We hope that once the public sees the benefits they will start to demand them from builders as standard. It is our intention that our next phase is to build 25 more Superspec houses around the country which will be fully monitored to prove our predictions.'

BRECSU project leader Bil Musannif endorsed this:

'Through this initiative, EEO and BRECSU hope to encourage other builders to offer more houses in which quality includes improved energy performance, by showing that such houses are more marketable.'

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