



Chartered property,
land and construction
surveyors

Professional Guidance Note

RESIDENTIAL RETROFIT STANDARD

Guidance Note – 1st Edition



RICS®

Residential Retrofit Standard

Guidance Note

SCSI guidance note 1st edition

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The intention of this document is not to replace, but rather localise the RICS Residential Retrofit Standard 1st Edition, March 2024, for specific use by surveyors in Ireland.

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SCSI Guidance Notes

This is a guidance note. Where recommendations are made for specific professional tasks, these are intended to represent 'best practice', i.e. recommendations that in the opinion of SCSI meet a high standard of professional competence. Although members are not required to follow the recommendations contained in the note, they should consider the following:

When an allegation of professional negligence is made against a surveyor, a court or tribunal may take account of the contents of any relevant guidance notes published by SCSI in deciding whether the member had acted with reasonable competence.

In the opinion of SCSI, a member conforming to the practices recommended in this note should have at least a partial defence to an allegation of negligence if they have followed those practices. However, members have the responsibility of deciding when it is inappropriate to follow the guidance.

It is for each surveyor to decide on the appropriate procedure to follow in any professional task. However, where members do not comply with the practice recommended in this note, they have a good reason. In the event of a legal dispute, a court or tribunal may require them to explain why they decided not to adopt the recommended practice. Also, if members have not followed this guidance, and their actions are questioned in an SCSI disciplinary case, they will be asked to explain the actions they did take, and this may be taken into account by the panel.

In addition, guidance notes are relevant to professional competence in that each member should be up to date and should have knowledge of guidance notes within a reasonable time of their coming into effect.

SCSI Standards Framework

The SCSI/RICS produce a range of professional standards, guidance, and information documents. These have been defined in the table below. This document is a Guidance Note (GN).

Type of document	Definition	Status
Standard International standard	An international high level principle based standard developed in collaboration with other relevant bodies	Mandatory
Professional statement SCSI/RICS professional statement (PS)	A document that provides members with mandatory requirements or a rule that a member or firm is expected to adhere to. This term also encompasses practice statements, Red Book professional standards, global valuation practice statements, regulatory rules, SCSI/RICS Rules of Conduct and government codes of practice.	Mandatory
Guidance and information SCSI/RICS code of practice	Document approved by SCSI/RICS, and endorsed by another professional body/ stakeholder, that provides users with recommendations for accepted good practice as followed by conscientious practitioners.	Mandatory or recommended good practice (will be confirmed in the document itself). Usual principles apply in cases of negligence if best practice is not followed.
SCSI/RICS guidance note (GN)	Document that provides users with recommendations or approaches for accepted good practice as followed by competent and conscientious practitioners.	Recommended best practice. Usual principles apply in cases of negligence if best practice is not followed.
SCSI/RICS information paper (IP)	Practice-based information that provides users with the latest technical information, knowledge or common findings from regulatory reviews.	Information and/or recommended best practice. Usual principles apply in cases of negligence if technical information is known in the market.
SCSI/RICS insight	Issues-based input that provides users with the latest information. This term encompasses thought leadership papers, market updates, topical items of interest, white papers, futures, reports and news alerts.	Information only.
SCSI/RICS economic/market report	A document is usually based on a survey of members, or a document highlighting economic trends.	Information only.
SCSI/RICS consumer guide	A document designed solely for use by consumers, providing some limited technical advice.	Information only.
Research	An independent peer-reviewed arm's length research document designed to inform members, market professionals, end users and other stakeholders.	Information only.

Glossary

Term	Definition
Accessible	Part of a property that can be easily reached, exposed or entered without undue effort as long as it is safe to do so.
Building standards	A document or series of documents that specify how approvals under Building Regulations may be complied with; known as 'Technical Guidance Documents' or 'Acceptable Construction Details'
Client	Customer or consumer, the party who has commissioned the Service or is the ultimate end-user, for example, a tenant of a residential property that has been the subject of a retrofit Service.
Competent person scheme	A government-approved scheme for an individual qualified to a standard to satisfactorily inspect, test, certify, assess and report on any part of a property, e.g., a 'Registered Gas Installer (RGI).
Complex properties	Dwellings that consist of many different and connected parts. Typical examples include properties that have been extensively altered and extended and/or are built using several different distinct construction methods and/or materials.
Conventional properties	Dwellings designed and built using construction methods and materials that are considered typical, usual and/or ordinary for that type, region and age.
BER Assessor	Member of an approved and accredited Building Energy Rating Assessor scheme, trained in preparing energy assessments using the appropriate energy assessment methodology.
Dwelling	A residential property or building, including a house, bungalow or flat.
EEM	Energy Efficiency Measure – a combination of products and materials together with any related installation method, equipment requirements and performance objectives, for installation in existing buildings for the purpose of enhancing the energy efficiency of those buildings.
NBCMSO	National Building Control and Market Surveillance Office (BCMS)
Historic building	A building or structure that is on the Register of Protected Structures with the local authority, on the Register of Historic Monuments, Record of Monuments and Places, the National Inventory or Architectural Heritage or because of its historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest and/or is situated in an Architectural Conservation Area or similar area.
IAQ	Internal Air Quality (of the dwelling or part of the dwelling).
Inspection	A careful visual examination of the inside and outside of an existing residential property and all permanent outbuildings as may be necessary to provide a retrofit Service. For example, to assess and establish the technical feasibility of providing retrofit Services and/or for preparing design drawings and other relevant information, such as specifications and/or for administering the contract for the installation of EEMs during building works and/or for evaluating the efficiency and efficacy of the final retrofit installation(s).

Locality	The neighbourhood, district and/or region in which the subject property is located.
LZC	Low and zero carbon technologies.
MMC	Modern methods of construction – a method of building a residential property that uses a variety of new and innovative building techniques and materials. In some cases, whole parts of the residential property can be made in a factory and transported to the building site.
Neglected (condition)	A description of a property or any part(s) thereof identifying it as one that has been allowed to fall into disrepair due to a failure to maintain any part or parts (e.g. the roof covering and/or a service installation) in an appropriate manner consistent with the property's age, type, location and character.
Non-traditional	A property type that was usually built as part of a government-funded housing scheme after one of the two world wars, intended to provide relatively temporary 'homes fit for heroes', although some types were also built privately. Designed and constructed using prefabricated methods such as reinforced concrete, steel or timber frame;
PHPP	Passive House Planning Package – a domestic energy assessment model.
Post-retrofit inspector	The appropriately qualified and competent professional with responsibility for carrying out the evaluation of the completed project.
Protected building or property	A building or property that is or is part of a World Heritage Site, a scheduled monument, a listed building, a protected wreck site, a registered park or garden, a registered battlefield, in a conservation area – and/or other locally 'listed' assets.
Property	A building's total external and internal structure and fabric including any party wall structures, all fixed plant and services, such as electricity and water installations, heating and cooling systems, foul and surface water drainage and permanent outbuildings and/or other parts that may reasonably require consideration in connection with the provision of retrofit Services.
DEAP	The Dwelling Energy Assessment Procedure (DEAP) is used by BER assessors to calculate the energy performance and carbon dioxide emissions of a home's space heating, water heating, ventilation and lighting.
Recommended documents	The documents listed in section 1.4 of this professional standard. SCSl members should have a satisfactory working knowledge of the necessary documents as required to competently carry out a retrofit Service. They should update their knowledge and understanding in the usual way.
Referral fee	An amount of money that is paid by one organisation to another for being recommended to a client or customer.
Repairing covenants	Terms in an agreement that usually result in an annual sum paid to the landlord or freeholder that contributes towards the repair and maintenance of shared parts and facilities at a property (for example, roof coverings, walls, retrofit installations such as 'renewable' systems, shared gardens, hallways and lifts, typically at a block of flats).
Residential property survey	This comprises an inspection (also called 'assessment'), report and advice on the condition of a residential property, e.g. a 'level 3' or 'level 2' survey completed in accordance with the SCSl Surveys
Retrofit assessor	The appropriately qualified and competent professional with responsibility for carrying out the survey inspection, design and/or other technical assessment of the property chosen for retrofit, e.g. full members of SCSl/RICS or registered surveyor
Retrofit contract administrator	The appropriately qualified and competent professional with responsibility for monitoring the construction and/or fitting of the retrofit installation(s) and associated building works, such as repairs prior to installation of EEMs at the property chosen for retrofit, e.g. an SCSl member, engineer, architect or similar.
Retrofit coordinator	The appropriately qualified and competent professional with responsibility for end- to-end coordination of a residential retrofit project, e.g. a project manager or similar.
Retrofit designer	The appropriately qualified and competent professional with responsibility for design and specification of a retrofit project, e.g. an architect, chartered building surveyor or similar.

Retrofit installer	Person or organisation responsible for undertaking and supervising the physical placement of an EEM in an existing building, together with any other associated repairs and other works, usually a building contractor.
Retrofit lead professional	The appropriately qualified and competent professional with responsibility for end-to-end coordination of a retrofit commercial project, e.g. a project manager or similar.
SCSI / RICS member(s)	An individual member of SCSI (as MSCSI, Assoc SCSI or FSCSI) and/or an individual member of RICS (as MRICS, AssocRICS or FRICS)
AHB	Approved Housing Body.
Service(s)	The professional retrofit Service includes advice provided by the SCSI member in connection with the installation of the EEM(s) and other matters associated with improving energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions, protecting the building's fabric and contributing to occupants' well-being in the dwelling.
Service role	A role performed by a suitably qualified professional to provide the Service in accordance with the terms of engagement agreed with the client(s), e.g. a retrofit assessor or post-retrofit inspector.
Software package	A set of computer-based software that fulfils a particular function. A typical example would be a computer-based building design, specification and contract management package used by building designers, or inspection and reporting package used by some residential surveyors.
Special Property	A property, dwelling or building that is protected, historic, traditional, complex, non-traditional or in a neglected condition; and by implication therefore very likely to require higher than usual levels of technical knowledge, understanding and competence when it is the subject of a retrofit, or any other, professional Service.
Tests	Specific and targeted measures to check, analyse, monitor and/or confirm the quality, performance or reliability of parts of the property. For example, tests relating to the construction of a building like taking samples of the building fabric (plaster, brick and concrete) for laboratory analysis of those materials or checking the performance of a service system (such as checking the safety, performance or efficiency of an installed EEM, heating or cooling appliances, electrical systems or other 'renewable' installations). Other types of tests include those a post-retrofit inspector would carry out. The SCSI member will generally only carry out such testing when suitably qualified and competent. Testing of service installations (especially 'services that kill') should be carried out by a member of a competent person scheme or other qualified person. The use of a moisture meter, for example, to help diagnose the presence of condensation and other moisture, and the opening and closing of windows and doors are not 'tests'.
Terms of Engagement	The document, describes in an easily understood manner, what has been agreed the SCSI member will provide for the client, i.e. the Service.
Traditional building or dwelling	Building constructed of vapour-permeable materials that absorb moisture and readily allow its evaporation, for example, solid brick, earthen or stone external walls bedded and surrounded in a true lime mortar, or old timber-framed walls with infill or cavity walls.
VOC	Volatile organic compound.

Notes:

For the sake of brevity, the roles described with the prefix 'retrofit', e.g. 'retrofit designer' are usually referred to in this professional standard by omitting the prefix; thus, 'retrofit designer' may be described as 'designer'. The descriptions 'dwelling', 'building' and 'property' are interchangeable in this professional standard.

1. Introduction

1.1. General

SCSI sets standards and provides guidance for its members practising in residential property in Ireland. In the last few years, the scale of social, economic, political, technological and now climate change has been without precedent. The urgent need to adapt residential (and other) buildings to mitigate and manage global climate change, reduce carbon emissions, increase energy efficiency, help achieve energy security and protect the well-being of the occupiers of dwellings will require SCSI members to adapt to even more changes and the pace of change is likely to become increasingly urgent.

To enable members to adapt and innovate, SCSI intends this professional standard to provide a clear, flexible framework within which SCSI members can provide high-quality residential retrofit Services the public can recognise and trust, which are consistent with the high standards expected by SCSI and are fit-for-purpose in an ever-changing world.

This professional standard sets out a series of concise mandatory and recommended requirements. These establish 'benchmarks' around which SCSI members can deliver retrofit Services that meet their client's needs in a changing environment. It also provides information that the public and their advisers will find useful.

The purpose of this professional standard is to: establish a clear framework that sets minimum expectations to maintain consistent, high-quality standards for residential property retrofit advice with respect to the provision of retrofit installations; including project management, survey inspection, technical assessment, design, specification, contract administration and project evaluation Services that SCSI members provide.

- anticipate that members will act in a 'Service role' or 'roles' as retrofit 'lead professionals', 'assessors', 'designers', 'contract administrators' and 'post-retrofit inspectors'; whose duties are set out in considerably more (but not definitive) detail in the recommended documents listed at section 1.4 in this professional standard and other SCSI guidance generally available to SCSI members.
- provide best practice recommendations for SCSI members who deliver retrofit Services.

1.2. Professional background

SCSI members discharge their duties in a profession, with a duty of care consistent with acting in the best interests of their client and in the wider 'public interest'. The actions and/or omissions of SCSI members when carrying out their professional roles and/or complying with their obligations affect people's lives.

SCSI members have obligations, including to their clients and the wider public interest – this is consistent with:

- doing their best for every client and dwelling undergoing a retrofit Service; thereby
- improving the resilience and performance of the dwelling and
- enhancing and improving the lives and well-being of the occupiers and visitors to the dwelling; and thus
- helping to mitigate and manage the effects of climate change.

In this regard, SCSI members should recognise that the project stages and advice in the retrofit Service described in the Recommended Documents represent some of the best practices for property professionals and the construction industry – see Appendix A.

1.3. Scope

This professional standard covers residential property retrofit Services for any and/or all Service roles likely to be undertaken by SCSI members and for clients likely to commission such services. The primary purpose of such a Service is to ensure any retrofit of a dwelling is appropriate for the property (especially if the subject of the Service is a special property), and the client, who is likely (but not necessarily) the owner and/or the occupier. Clients who require retrofit Services will vary from owners of large housing estates and blocks of flats and tenements to single-home owners – a great number of dwellings in Ireland require the provision of retrofit installations. Some of the work may be publicly funded, some will be funded privately, possibly with the assistance of a mortgage lender. In all cases, SCSI members **should** consider and comply with their professional standards, especially ethical standards. If a client requires that S.R. 54:2014/A2:2022 is adopted for the retrofit project, SCSI members should note they will need to comply with additional requirements.

This professional standard provides:

- the requirements (usually indicated by the use of the word 'must in **bold**) to which all residential retrofit Services offered by SCSI members **should** conform and
- best practice advice that outlines how satisfactory compliance with the mandatory requirements may be achieved, including:
- the process of confirming the scope and nature of the Service(s) to be provided
- the type(s) of Service to which this document applies
- the nature of the pre-inspection preparation and research required
- the project management, careful consideration of current energy performance, property survey inspection and assessment, project design, specification, contract administration of retrofit and/or building works, project evaluation and completion process associated with each type of Service
- post-project liaison with the client and all other interested parties, e.g. the occupier and
- Service closure activities.

This professional standard considers each requirement in turn and provides information on the nature and extent of each type of Service(s) to be provided.

1.4. Recommended documents and other necessary guidance

In providing residential retrofit Services, SCSI members who offer such Services should have sufficient knowledge of necessary guidance and legislation relevant to the dwelling type, which guidance may include any of the following:

- Building Regulations 1997 (as amended)
- Technical Guidance Documents Part A to Part M
- Code of Practice for Inspecting and Certifying Buildings and Works 2016
- I.S. EN 16883:2017 Conservation of Cultural Heritage - Guidelines for improving the energy performance of historic buildings (NSAI)
- S.R. 54:2014/A2:2022 - Code of Practice for the Energy Efficient Retrofit of a Dwelling (NSAI)
- Boundaries: Procedures For Boundary Identification, Demarcation And Dispute Resolution in Ireland - 3rd Edition

- Bringing Back Homes, Manual for the Reuse of Existing Buildings (Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage 2018)
- Code of Practice for Inspecting and Certifying Buildings and Works (Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage 2016) • Conservation Advice Series (Dept. of Housing, Local Government and Heritage)
- Deep Energy Renovation of Traditional Buildings. Addressing Knowledge Gaps and Skills Training in Ireland. (The Heritage Council 2018. Author Caroline Engel Purcell, PhD Arch, MSc Arch Cons, BA Arch)
- Heritage Resource Guide (The Heritage Council 2018) • Irish Period Houses – A Conservation Guidance Manual (Frank Keohane 2016)
- South Georgian Core Townhouse Re-Use Guidance Document (Dublin City Council 2019)
- Surveying Safely: Health & Safety Principles for Property Professionals (RICS GN, Global. 2018)
- SCSi Guide to Project Management in Period Buildings (Society of Chartered Surveyors of Ireland 2016)
- SCSi Guide to the Building Control (Amendment) Regulations 2014 for Chartered Project Management Surveyors (Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland 2016)
- any other guidance that may be reasonably and appropriately required for the dwelling type and/or location.
- Improving Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings – Guidance for Specifiers and Installers (2023)
- Investigation of moisture and its effects on traditional buildings, Joint position statement, 1st edition, September 2022 (RICS, Historic England and PCA)
- BS EN 16883:2017 Conservation of cultural heritage - guidelines for improving the energy performance of historic buildings
- Energy Upgrading of Traditional Buildings for Low Embodied and Life Cycle Emissions by Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.
- any other guidance that may be reasonably and appropriately required for the dwelling type and/or location.
- Any other guidance that may become necessary to providing competent residential retrofit Services now or in due course, given the speed of technological change and alterations in knowledge and/or amendments to the above documents, e.g. in relation to flood resilience and fire precautions and
- Other relevant guidance and legislation that applies in different parts of Ireland.

It can be reasonably anticipated that in providing residential retrofit Services, the necessary levels of technical knowledge, understanding and competence required by SCSi members **should** be higher if the subject of the retrofit Service is a special property.

1.5. Effective date

This professional standard is effective six months from publication.

2. Setting up the Service

2.1. General

In carrying out any residential retrofit Service(s), SCSI members **should**:

- have a clear understanding of client needs including funding and/or budget
- have the appropriate knowledge (especially of the property type and locality), understanding, competence, skills and experience to provide the agreed Service
- ensure potential clients understand the nature of and differences between the Service and Service roles offered so they can make an informed choice and
- agree the full details of the terms of engagement with the client before the Service is delivered.

2.2. Conflicts of interest and referral fees

SCSI members **should** declare any potential conflicts and how these are managed in accordance with the current editions of [SCSI Conduct and Disciplinary Rules and Procedure](#). They **should** ensure that any advice is correct, impartial and appropriate for the client, occupier and property and is unaffected by any financial inducement, in accordance with the SCSI Conduct and Disciplinary Rules and Procedure.

SCSI members **should** be transparent and open with their clients or potential clients by acknowledging that they have offered or received a referral fee or other inducement prior and relating to taking the instruction if such applies.

If the SCSI member has offered or received a referral fee or other inducement, they **should** provide clients or prospective clients with a written statement (which should be included in the terms of engagement) stating one of the following, depending on which applies:

- that the SCSI member does not pay a referral fee or equivalent to any party who may have recommended them or
- that a payment has been or may be made, either individually or as part of a third-party commercial relationship.

2.3. Qualifications and experience

SCSI members may, if suitably qualified and competent, carry out any professional role in relation to residential retrofit Services at any SCSI membership level, currently Assoc SCSI, MSCSI and FSCSI

To ensure clients receive, and professionals provide, a high level of Service, any SCSI member should be qualified, experienced and able to deliver the particular residential retrofit Service(s) required by the client. This is especially important if the property is a special property. Such requirements are consistent with SCSI members being part of a self-regulating profession. The requisite Service level may be achieved by:

- demonstrating competence, for example, by obtaining a relevant, appropriate and/or suitable qualification, becoming an appropriately qualified professional
- having knowledge and understanding of the tasks to be undertaken and the risks involved, especially to the long-term performance of the building and the well-being of the building occupier(s)
- possessing the skills, competence, experience and ability to carry out their duties in relation to the appropriate level of Service and

- identifying their own limitations and taking appropriate action where their ability to provide a high level of Service is found to be inadequate, for example, by engaging in regular, appropriate, relevant and structured life-long learning (continuing professional development).

2.4. Knowledge of locality and nature of property

SCSI members should be familiar with the nature and complexity of the subject property type, the region in which it is situated and its relevance to the subject instruction, including:

- common and uncommon housing styles, materials and construction techniques. This is particularly important where retrofit and associated Services are offered for special properties, where understanding the interaction of different building materials and techniques, for example, 'vapour-permeable' lime renders and mortars or the potential for corrosion of embedded metal reinforcement or steel frames in general, is essential in diagnosing defects and/or deficiencies in the property and the extent to which provision of retrofit installations is appropriate and/or may require variation to accommodate the special needs of the client, occupier and property
- current advice and guidance relating to asbestos a, including SCSI's [Asbestos: legal requirements and best practice for property professionals and clients](#), and other common potentially hazardous and/or deleterious materials
- an awareness of the Traditional, non-traditional and MMC
- site-specific information such as property position, exposure, shading, orientation and local climate including wind direction(s)
- environmental issues including local ecology, geology, topography, and publicly available information (see Appendix B for further details)
- the location of Protected Structures, heritage assets, and ACAs; including the implications of these designations, especially in relation to legislation that affects repair, improvement work and provision of retrofit installations and Services
- a basic understanding of the type of tenure for the subject property – where the property is held on a leasehold basis, the SCSI member should meet the requirements set out in section 2.8 of this standard.
- relevant requirements specified by local and regional government organisations and structures and
- awareness of the social and industrial heritage relevant to the instruction.

Although a SCSI member with this knowledge, understanding and competence may be able to provide all levels of retrofit Services, those who provide such Services on special properties will require a broader and deeper technical knowledge. Where appropriate, the SCSI member should decline the instruction if the subject property type is beyond their knowledge, understanding, experience, competence and skill level.

2.5. Client liaison

SCSI members should take all reasonable steps, which **should** be appropriately documented and recorded, to ensure that clients:

- understand the differences between the types of residential retrofit Services and roles, including the extent and limitations of each option
- are advised of the range of options the SCSI member can offer, together with the key features and benefits of each
- are aware of the fee that will be charged for the Service
- agree the terms of engagement
- agree on the Service format and method of delivery and

- explain the intended future use of the property (for example, to be altered from commercial to residential, to be 'buy to let' or currently let).

Clients may not be familiar with the range of residential retrofit Services available and will require advice on which type of Service(s) best suits their needs. The SCSI member should ensure the client has access to appropriate information before any contract is formed.

Where instructions have been received from a third party (for example, from another property professional), the SCSI member should satisfy themselves that the instruction is best suited to both the property and the needs of the client.

Where the SCSI member finds the instruction is not suitable, the client should be given the reasons why and advised on the appropriate Service.

2.6. Service roles

SCSI members should ensure their Service is clearly 'benchmarked', documented and recorded against the Service role, as much of the Service role, or those elements of the Service role, that have been required by and agreed with the client(s) in the terms of engagement. SCSI members are likely to be involved in all professional roles required in the installation of residential retrofit improvements, given the fact SCSI members have wide experience in land, property and construction. Some SCSI members may only act in one role, others in several. They should be mindful of the fact that they owe a duty of care to their client(s) and others who may reasonably rely on their advice. The fundamental requirements needed to satisfactorily tackle climate change in existing buildings are to assess, design, install and evaluate measures appropriate to each individual property and/or client. Table 1 summarises a typical 'retrofit process' that is likely to be encountered by an SCSI member.

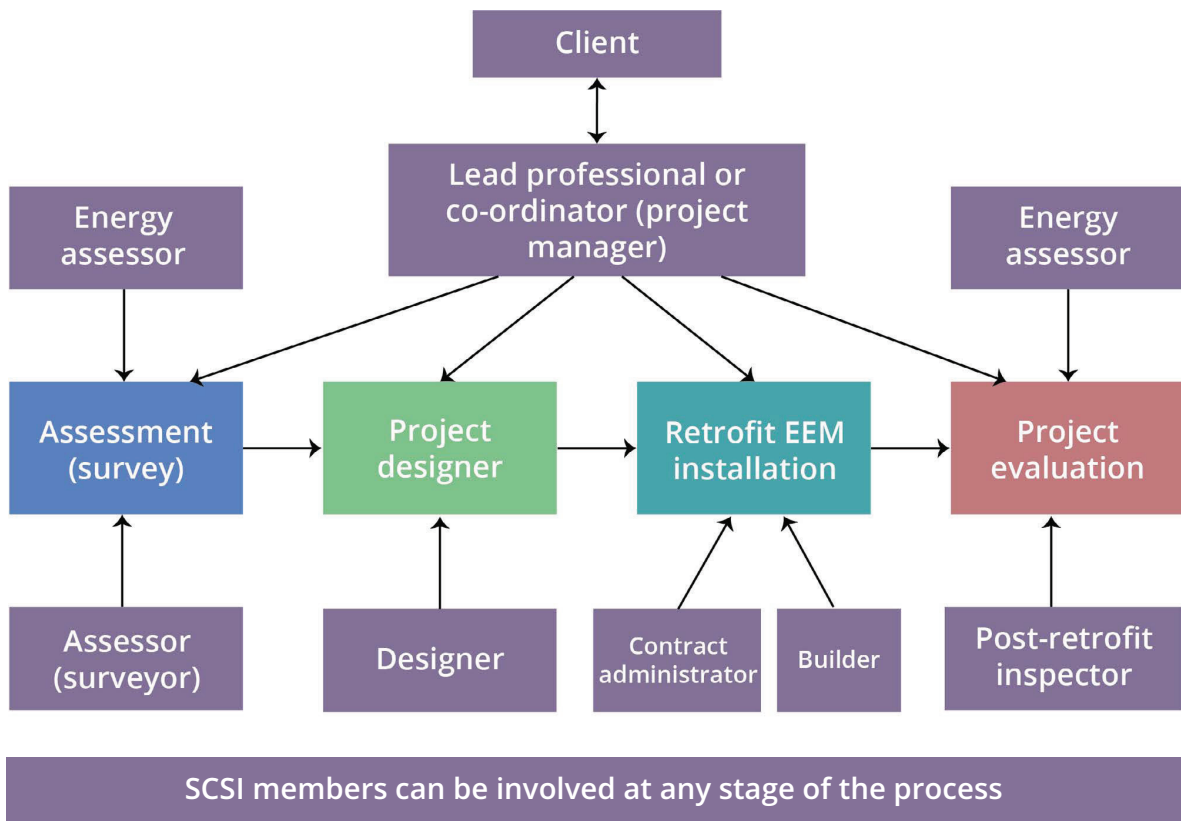


Figure 1: Retrofit process – individuals involved

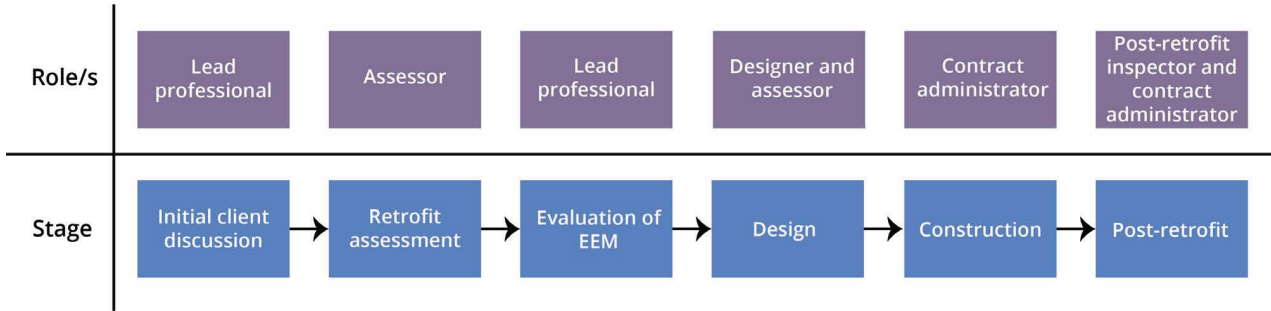


Figure 2: Retrofit process – roles by stage

Table 1: Retrofit project stages and Service roles

Retrofit project stages and Service roles	Professionals and project team members most likely involved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> initial discussions with the client consideration of client requirements site inspection and/or desktop appraisal appointment of a project team and agreement of an initial brief, including agreeing and signing terms of engagement confirming extent, length and requirements of project and fees. 	Lead professional
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> detailed assessment of the existing building, including providing the client with an appropriate report considering context, condition, defects, suitability of previously-installed EEMs, current BER rating, recording all necessary information Generation of plans, sketches and photographs, etc., assess occupancy (current, anticipated or intended) and performance, including current ventilation systems, part L compliance and appropriate upgrades carry out any necessary detailed technical assessment (especially if a special property, e.g. inappropriate cement-based repairs over original lime bedding and pointing) and any further investigation identify those issues that require attention before installation of likely EEMs assess the heritage values of a traditional and/or protected building. 	Assessor
Evaluation of EEM and building improvement options to identify appropriate work, such as: improving levels of insulation in a property-specific way upgrading / improving and altering existing ventilation arrangements, especially where the installation of one or more EEM will improve air-tightness and thereby increase the risk of interstitial and/or surface condensation, especially in special properties, taking into consideration the results of the building assessment.	Designer and assessor
Agreement of intended outcomes of the project with the client and/or occupier, including consideration of likely timeframes and any necessary phasing due to special considerations such as funding, allowing for specific performance targets for the property and the EEMs and including consideration of occupier and/or client requirements.	Designer and assessor
Preparation (including agreement with the client) of an improvement plan for the building, including any necessary repairs, possibly to be implemented in stages – some projects may be relatively simple and be managed over months, whereas others may take many years.	Designer

Design and specification of the work based on the improvement plan, comprising preparation of planning drawings, full working drawings, including for Building standards purposes, specification, bills of quantities, including PSDP. Manage an appropriate procurement process such as tendering, design and build, turnkey and negotiating a recognised building contract with suitably qualified and competent contractors with experience, knowledge and understanding of the particular building type.	Designer
Obtaining statutory approvals such as change of use, planning (including ACAs), Building standards and satisfactorily resolving (before works begin on site) any associated matters, such as liaison with occupiers who may remain in the property during the works and dealing with party wall and other legal issues.	Designer
Oversee the works including monitoring repair works that may be required before the retrofit work (installing EEMs), dealing with unforeseen issues found during opening-up (the risk of such a requirement increases for a special property) including variations to the work (and therefore possibly the price), defective workmanship and/or materials, interim valuations, the release of retentions as appropriate and issuing completion certificates.	Contract administrator
Overseeing and/or arranging all necessary and appropriate final testing and commissioning, especially of newly-fitted service installations and handover of the retrofitted building, including obtaining necessary competent persons or completion certificates and any associated warranties and guarantees.	Contract administrator
Monitoring as-built and installed EEMs and retrofitted building performance to meet or surpass the intended targets, including occupier and client liaison and associated Services.	Post-retrofit inspector
Evaluation of the project to confirm outcomes, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • occupier and client liaison • identify any unintended consequences • compare project outcomes with issues identified in the initial assessment and ascertain if they have been satisfactorily addressed and specify any necessary remedial works, including arranging for such work, overseeing the work and final sign-off. 	Post-retrofit inspector and contract administrator

Notes:

All project team members **should** ensure the contractor who carries out the retrofit works is aware that they are responsible for supervision of their work people and building works on site to ensure satisfactory installation and completion of the EEMs.

The lead professional, client and/or occupier are likely to be involved at most or all stages, dependant on the project type.

SCSI members should be aware that for large retrofit projects, the lead professional will be involved at all stages, acting as liaison with the client(s). Whereas, for smaller projects, it is more likely that the client may decide to coordinate certain roles themselves. SCSI members **should** advise the client on best practices and allow for any variations necessary and required by each individual project and client. SCSI members will require good communication skills in all projects and **should** keep the client(s) updated at all required relevant stages.

Some clients may not be in a position to undertake all recommended EEMs as soon as might be required. In these cases, the SCSI member should advise the client on an appropriately phased approach, possibly over many years; including any potential implications such as risks to the property and occupiers that might arise from such phasing.

2.7. Terms of Engagement

The client **should** receive an up-to-date document that describes the terms of engagement matched to the specific instruction. These are likely to be standard documents amended to take account of the property type and intended future use; and any specific client requirements, either in terms of content or format.

Standard documents may also be appropriate for most special properties, but careful consideration should be given to whether any variation such as additional Services is required for the specific instruction. Where these are varied, these **should** be clearly described and explained by the SCSI member during the pre-inspection discussions with the client.

The terms of engagement should be issued by the SCSI member and agreed upon by the clients **before** any advice is given or the inspection is carried out and before the delivery of the Service.

The terms of engagement **should** point out that the residential retrofit Service does not include an asbestos inspection and it falls outside Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Exposure to Asbestos) (Amendment) Regulations 2010 and subsequent Regulations and associated legislation. However, the Service should emphasise the suspected presence of asbestos-containing materials and any personal hazards arising if any assessment or inspection identifies that possibility, or it is reasonable to suspect its presence.

Minimum requirements for terms of engagement have been included in Appendix C. See also the current edition of RICS' [Risk, liability and Insurance](#).

2.8. Client liaison

Any residential retrofit Service for a leasehold residential property raises separate and additional factors arising from shared responsibilities and the wide variety of repairing covenants in common use. Additionally, where the leasehold property is an apartment, the Service is usually restricted to the subject property and the accessible common parts and grounds (unless instructions have been received to provide the Service for the entire estate or block(s) in the estate). It can be reasonably anticipated that freeholders, in many cases freehold companies with lessees as directors, will sometimes be the client. Onerous repairing liabilities may exist independently from the property, for example, where the lease imposes a liability on the property owner or occupier to pay a proportion of the total estate or block repair costs.

The SCSI member should set out the limitations of any advice given, such as stating that no due diligence has taken place in relation to the true legal effect of **the** lease – this is exclusively the responsibility of the client's legal advisers. The SCSI member may need to obtain legal advice regarding these (and other) legal matters to help protect the client's interests – see section 4.5 and Appendix E.

SCSI members should be aware that legal advisers do not usually inspect the property so the SCSI member should:

- act as the 'eyes and ears' of the legal adviser and liaise with the legal adviser and client as required
- have sufficient knowledge and understanding of, and competence in relation to, legal issues that typically arise with properties held under leasehold tenures
- identify any obvious and relevant matters that may affect the client's responsibility for carrying out repairs and liability to pay towards their cost and
- consider recommending that the client obtains independent legal advice on the terms and interpretation of the lease and any issues arising, particularly relating to ground rents, future maintenance and service charge obligations.

The SCSI member should be aware that these issues can also affect freehold properties. A property held under a freehold tenure can also have common or shared repairing and/or other rights and liabilities, sometimes onerous.

3. Carrying out the residential retrofit Service

3.1. General

In performing part of, one or more of the Service roles and Service agreed in the terms of engagement, the SCSI member **should**, as appropriate:

- project manage all the professional tasks consistent with the Service role(s) agreed to achieve the retrofit installation(s) discussed and required by the client(s) and agreed in the terms of engagement, ensuring compliance at all times with the SCSI Conduct And Disciplinary Rules And Procedures including any conflict of interest
- reasonably comply with all relevant SCSI professional standards, especially mandatory requirements
- undertake and be aware of appropriate pre-inspection research as required by the specific project to support the Service (see Appendix B)
- be familiar with the type of property to be inspected and the area that it is situated, especially if the project is for a special property
- inspect, measure and otherwise document the property at all relevant stages of the retrofit project in accordance with the required Service agreed
- produce an accurate and comprehensive record of the property at each time of inspection, e.g. for assessment, design, specification, contract management or evaluation purposes, to allow professional reflection
- only recommend justifiable further investigation, e.g. where only a 'competent person' is qualified to confirm condition, safety and efficiency of a service installation
- be clear during the Service about the scope of inspections of the property, including limitations, caveats and consequent possible actions available to the client
- deliver property-specific and clearly understandable information to the client(s) in whatever format has been agreed (electronic, hard-copy, verbal, etc.), e.g. project brief, property assessment inspection report, design drawings, specification and evaluation report(s), properly and accurately reflecting the acquired information, from whatever source
- deliver advice that is client-specific and appropriately specific to the property, bearing in mind the location, exposure, construction and intended occupation
- prepare designs, including specifications for proposed retrofit installations that comply with the terms of engagement in all respects, paying special attention to detailing that will help prevent effects such as thermal-bridging, water penetration, moisture accumulation, reduction of internal air quality, poor ventilation, overheating and unnecessary heat loss
- Undertake interim inspections as required, certify and sign-off the retrofit installation works diligently and regularly so as to ensure that the completed works comply with the intended outcomes, design, specification, Building standards and good building practice, especially if the project is for a special property
- Inspect, evaluate and report on the retrofit installation works in a manner that is easily understandable by all the involved parties, especially the client(s)

- offer to discuss with the client(s) any aspects of the Service such as project coordination, property assessment report, proposals including design, specification and contract management/administration and project evaluation at any reasonable time;
- ensure any software, technology and system used to deliver the Service is compliant with this professional standard and
- properly and adequately document the Service and ensure there is a complete record, which **should** be securely stored and accessible in compliance with current data protection legislation and regulations.

3.2. Locality

SCSI members **should** be familiar with the type of property to be inspected and the area, especially the immediate surroundings, in which it is situated. Research about the locality and property should be carried out in accordance with section 2.4.

The depth and breadth of the research will depend on a range of factors including the SCSI member's knowledge and experience, the locality and the client's specific requirements. Research for retrofit Services on a special property is likely to be more extensive. The level of research should be appropriate and proportionate to the project and the SCSI member's role.

The research will depend on circumstances and may vary over time as additional property-based information becomes publicly available. Desktop research should include information about the general environment, neighbourhood and subject property as described in Appendix B.

3.3. Information from client, property occupier or others

Where relevant and practical, the client, including the owner and/or tenant or their agent should be asked to provide appropriate information, including details of:

- installation of previous EEMs, e.g. roof or wall insulation or new boiler, including all project assessment, design, specification, installation and evaluation information
- previous alteration, repair and improvement works or known inherent defects to the property
- the current BER and advisory report based on Dwelling Energy Assessment Procedure (DEAP), or other energy or assessment model results if available
- air-permeability and Indoor Air Quality test results
- copies of or access to actual energy or other similar costs and bills;
- planning permissions and similar consents
- Building standards' approvals including any 'completion certificate' e.g. for service installations such as electrical, heating, cooling and mechanical systems
- any relevant guarantees and warranties
- evidence of service agreements and
- confirmation of property ownership information including any onerous restrictions and any lease details.

It will also be appropriate to ask whether, to their knowledge, any building's insurance claims have been made and if the property (or neighbouring properties) has been flooded or has been the subject of any matter that

might complicate or hinder the retrofit Service, for example, presence of a protected species such as bats or an invasive species such as Japanese knotweed. Other matters should include ownership of boundaries, existence of any neighbour disputes (especially if the property is attached in any way), rights of way in favour of the property or enjoyed by other properties over the subject property and so on.

Some organisations, for example, Approved Housing Bodies may provide a range of information about the property at an early stage in the retrofit project. The SCSI member should carefully evaluate this information before incorporating it into the project advice given.

Where information is offered by the client, occupier or others, the SCSI member should evaluate the information provided and keep a clear record of it.

3.4. Equipment

For all retrofit Services, SCSI members should have access to suitable equipment required to complete the Service. The SCSI member **should** use such equipment and interpret results obtained in accordance with all available guidance such as manufacturers' instructions. The equipment and other necessary technology will vary depending on the Service provided, but will typically include:

- **Information-recording equipment:** methods of recording information will vary. SCSI members **should** produce an accurate and comprehensive record of the property at the time of inspection to contribute to during any report or Service production stage and before any advice is delivered.
- **Measuring equipment:** the SCSI member **should** measure in accordance with the current edition of SCSI Measuring Practice: Guidance Notes and the International Property Measurement Standards (www.ipmsc.org), or for the particular purpose as required by the guidance appropriate for the agreed Service. The SCSI member should collect appropriate dimensions and other property characteristics to a suitable level of accuracy.
- **Testing and monitoring equipment:** for testing air-permeability of the property envelope, measuring internal air quality in the dwelling, measuring and monitoring accumulated moisture or condensation or relative humidity levels in the dwelling, assessing the location(s) of cold bridges with thermal imaging devices and/or similar
- **Access equipment:** the SCSI member should have appropriate tools and equipment available that will enable reasonably safe inspection of all reasonably accessible parts of the property (depending on the nature of the Service)
- **Safety equipment:** SCSI members should carry out all parts of the Service safely. This covers work done in the office, travelling to and from the property, and during all inspections involved in the Service. SCSI members should have appropriate health and safety procedures and policies in place, including access to appropriate health and safety-related equipment. For more information see the current edition of [RICS Surveying Safely](#).

SCSI members should be aware that measurement protocols vary across different methodologies, for example, measurements for BERs compared with insurance reinstatement purposes, and use of external compared with internal measurements.

The SCSI member is responsible for carefully inspecting the property at the different stages of the retrofit project in accordance with the nature and type of Service, the terms of engagement and client needs.

3.5.1 Specific inspection details

The extent of an inspection will depend on a range of circumstances (including health and safety considerations). A number of critical aspects are identified in the recommended documents and these differentiate the levels of inspection appropriate for each Service and role.

SCSI members should ask the owner or occupier to open any traps and hatches that provide access to parts of the structure and move furniture and possessions where these prevent an appropriate level of inspection (where practicable). Where this is not done, SCSI members should inform the client, including confirming where any lack of inspection increases the risk that the agreed Service might be materially and adversely affected and a recommendation that the part(s) hitherto uninspected should be inspected to ensure a satisfactory Service is provided.

3.5.2 Personal safety during the inspection

The SCSI member **should** be able to safely undertake the tasks involved or manage others undertaking those same tasks. This is particularly important in relation to gaining access to voids that may be present in the property and in relation to the occupier and others who may come to harm because of acts and omissions by the SCSI member when performing their Service role.

The SCSI member should consider any reasonably foreseeable personal health and safety aspects including:

- keeping a record of their appointment either at the office or at home
- letting someone know their expected return time
- carrying a personal alarm
- carrying a mobile phone
- completing and recording, when legally required, a formal personal safety risk assessment at the property and
- using ladders and other equipment safely.

The SCSI member should be familiar with the current edition of [RICS Surveying safely](#).

3.5.3 Recording information

The SCSI member **should** keep a record of each and every inspection of the property that is the subject of the retrofit Service in strict accordance with section 4.12, and in accordance with S.R.54 2014/2022 if appropriate, including:

- the construction, insulation, types of service installations, retrofit installations previously fitted, condition and circumstances of inspection (including any limitations)
- the checks made to the fabric and structure and what was found
- appropriate dimensions and diagrams, sketch plans and any images captured during the inspection and
- the results of any tests that have been carried out, whether by the SCSI member or by others.

It is likely, if not inevitable, that for a special property; the retrofit Service will include more detailed and technical assessments of the building, and the amount of recorded information will be greater. In many such cases, depending on the particular circumstances, specific reference should be made to [Improving Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings \(December 2023\)](#) and the current edition of [Investigation of moisture and its effects on traditional buildings](#).

4. The retrofit Service

4.1. General principles

The SCSI member's overriding duty in retrofit projects is to improve the energy efficiency of dwellings by undertaking their professional duties to the required standard. Included in the duties of the SCSI member is to help improve the well-being of the client and/or occupier of the property. Retrofit improvements (EEMs) in dwellings will likely include the following (this list is not exhaustive and the nature of EEMs is likely to change over time due to technological advances):

- identifying defects (especially if the project is for a special property) that require attention before installation of EEMs and arranging for their satisfactory repair
- improving levels of insulation and airtightness
- managing moisture in the dwelling, including preventing weather resistance
- improving the supply of ventilation in the dwelling (if required), IAQ and managing hazards such as VOCs
- installing efficient heating and cooling systems and reducing the risks of overheating
- provision of efficient water heating and lighting systems and other equipment and appliances
- installing efficient energy control, metering and monitoring systems and LZC technologies.

The project coordination, desktop research, assessment, design, specification, contract management and evaluation of the Service **should** be property- and client-specific and:

- be clearly presented and follow a logical structure so clients can quickly find the required information
- be factual and unambiguous, and clearly separate fact and the SCSI member's opinion
- use non-technical terms where possible, although given the technical nature of the Service and involvement of many property professionals and contractors, technical terms will be required
- when technical words are used, the client may find a layperson's explanation helpful.

4.2. Content of the Service

The retrofit Service **should** conform to the agreed terms of engagement including the recommended documents where appropriate, good practice in document production and the following principles:

- clearly explain the Service and roles, what the client can expect from the retrofit Service and encourage the client to ask questions of the SCSI member and
- is structured in a way that enables the client to understand and locate required information easily and take the appropriate actions.

4.3. Service-specific requirements

4.3.1. General

The nature and content of the Service to be provided by the SCSI member will vary depending on the property-specific risk assessment process for each project and on the client's requirements. The general nature of each Service is described in the following subsections. Some clients may require projects to be carried out in strict accordance with published guidance such as S.R.54 2014/2022, others may require a more bespoke, enhanced or restricted Service. The SCSI member should note that the list below is not exhaustive and **should** be entirely familiar with their Service role as agreed with the client in their terms of engagement, described in the recommended documents and any other relevant and/or necessary documentation appropriate to the client's requirements.

4.3.2. Retrofit Service(s) that may be provided during any project

As a result of the terms of engagement agreed with the client, the SCSI member is likely to include part, one, some, several, all or more of the following types of professional advice in connection with the provision of projects involving residential retrofit Services:

Project management or coordination – project manager

- coordinate the overall retrofit Service from start to finish
- ensure the client is aware of the Service to be provided by all professionals and others involved and terms of engagement have been agreed
- carefully consider, evaluate and review the property's current energy performance including the BER and other appropriate and recognised energy assessments of the property
- ensure that intended outcomes are discussed and agreed upon with the client including all matters identified in the recommended documents, such as reductions in energy use, improving internal comfort including internal air quality, elimination of condensation (e.g. by reducing thermal bridging) and issues arising, sustainability, flood risk resilience, fire protection and protection of architectural and historical heritage and features
- engage, by agreement with the client, the services of other professionals (such as a structural engineer) and others as may reasonably be required to ensure a satisfactory Service is provided in accordance with the terms of engagement.
- liaise with the client, occupier, all other members of the project team and other interested parties as required to satisfactorily complete the project and comply with the terms of engagement and the SCSI member's professional obligations.
- ensure retrofit advice is provided to occupiers at certain intervals as necessary and appropriate including: on initial engagement, at inception of the project, on completion of the improvement option evaluation, on completion of design, around the time of completion of the retrofit installation, during project evaluation; all of which advice should ensure full and appropriate information (e.g. at completion stage: planning constraints, proposed external appearance [especially for protected properties], costs and fuel savings, priorities and recommendations) is given to the end-user
- ensure all necessary and associated legal documentation is obtained from the relevant parties such as building contractors and designers, including Building Regulations approvals and completion certificates, other certificates from competent persons, planning approvals including consents relating to protected and heritage buildings, test certificates such as for air-permeability and IAQ documentation with the Land and Conveyancing Law Reform Act 2009, revised and new energy assessments such as BER Certificates, confirmation of adequate professional indemnity insurance from all professionals involved in the project, manufacturer's information, Agrément Certificates, DoPs and CE marks, warranties and guarantees. Ensure all such documentation is passed to the client and/or occupier.

Property inspection and assessment – surveyor or assessor

- before a retrofit assessment collect, consider and review all available and necessary data regarding the property, e.g. by conducting a desktop study of online and other available information in accordance with the HSS amended as necessary, including existing energy assessments such as the BER
- assess and safely inspect the condition of the property to identify defects such as structural movement, inappropriate previous repairs (e.g. use of cement-based pointing or render over lime), condensation, water penetration, leaks, fungal decay, wood-boring insect attacks, mould and inadequate ventilation systems, preparing a photographic record of the property's features including defects
- report on the property based on the data collected including categorising defects in terms of urgency (those requiring attention before retrofit works can be installed, and those recommended but not so required), and taking into account all relevant factors such as property history, location, local environment, climate change, occupier safety, risks to the property and legal matters
- prepare a detailed property assessment to sufficiently establish 'U' values (for special properties, DEAP default values may be inappropriate) and moisture properties of the main building elements (exposed floors, walls and roofs), a detailed measured survey of critical dimensions (including windows and doors), identification of site constraints including legal and other relevant matters and adjoining properties, identification of service installations, appraisal of occupiers including any special requirements for vulnerable persons such as children or elderly people, a more detailed assessment of ventilation systems including any condensation and mould growth, an approved estimation of annual fuel use costs and CO₂ emissions.

Design and specification – designer

- prior to preparing the retrofit design, carry out an improvement option evaluation to identify the appropriate EEMs to be installed including pay-back calculations (making appropriate allowance for actual occupancy of the property) and assess the ventilation systems
- design and specify the proposed EEMs in the retrofit installations in accordance with the recommended documents, paying attention to the results of the retrofit assessment, using materials and techniques appropriate to the building type and making allowance for any risks associated with the property type (especially if a special property) and/or the sequencing or phasing of works, including for Health and Safety requirements, ensuring continuity of insulation (and ventilation) to help prevent thermal-bridging (especially at corners, junctions and edges of the property envelope), specifying repairs to remedy structural and other defects, providing for resilience against moisture including rainwater penetration and flooding, designing in a satisfactory and adequate supply of ventilation, arrangements to secure adequate internal air quality and appropriately allowing for fire safety, future maintenance, occupier safety and all relevant legal matters
- consider guidance (such as [Investigation of moisture and its effects on traditional buildings](#)), paying particular attention to the management of moisture in the property, to help prevent damage to the property and condensation
- in designing and specifying the EEMs in the retrofit installations, include measures to inhibit overheating, ensure the sequence of EEM installation is specified to ensure the resilience of the EEMs is not adversely affected and include any necessary improvements to the ventilation systems
- in circumstances where the property is protected, historic or traditional, it is important to consult a Building Conservation Accredited Surveyor to assess the building for adopting a 'holistic' approach regarding condition, EEMs and building performance and considering matters such as cultural and architectural heritage. Any proposed retrofit design that could cause harm to the significance of the historic building should be avoided where possible
- commissioning any necessary and appropriate report by a structural engineer or other suitably qualified person
- in preparing the design and specification of the retrofit installation where EEMs include improvements to the building fabric, include the allowance in the contract documents for an appropriately approved air-tightness test following completion of the work.

Contract monitoring – contract administrator

- monitor the installation of the retrofit design during the contract administration process to ensure the works comply with the retrofit design and good building practice, including all necessary and appropriate testing and commissioning of EEMs, reviewing the performance of the installed EEMs including consideration of feedback from occupiers; where EEMs and associated building works are incorrectly installed, defective and/or ineffective, arranging for ‘snagging’ works (in extreme circumstances allow for complete removal of defective works and appropriate remedial works) and provide retrofit installation advice that is customised to the occupiers’ needs
- issue any necessary variation orders and other contract instructions relating to the works to the contractor, e.g. as a result of discovering unforeseen defects during the opening-up of the building, carry out all roles usually undertaken by a quantity surveyor, such as agreeing to interim and penultimate valuations of the works and the final contract sum with the contractor or the contractor’s representative
- hand over the completed works to the client(s) (especially the occupier) in an appropriate manner including explaining function, safe and efficient operation, the importance of ventilation, care and maintenance of the retrofit systems, provision of the test, etc. and other certificates, including the provision of a new BER as appropriate
- carry out an air permeability test and IAQ test including identifying key air leakage locations, carrying out any other tests on site
- where requested, provide ‘toolbox talks’ to retrofit installers, but always include this requirement in certain circumstances such as the use of new or unusual materials, where the property is a special property, where the type of installation has not been installed before by the installer, or the design is especially challenging.

Project evaluation – post-retrofit inspector

- at the appropriate time(s), monitor and evaluate the project and undertake all reasonable steps including a structured liaison and feedback process with the client and/or occupier including checking and testing of parts of the project as required, test internal air quality
- review actual against predicted energy use, review property performance to determine whether the intended outcomes of the retrofit project have been achieved, take action where required to understand and resolve any discrepancy between predicted performance and actual outcome performance. Inspection and test plans (ITPs) should be used to manage quality.

See also Table 1 in section 2.6 for more detail on project stages and roles.

Every retrofit project will be different and the Service roles will vary depending on the circumstances of each project, such as the property type and the client’s needs.

4.3.3. Inspection and reporting levels for retrofit assessment (survey) purposes

The SCSi member **should** advise the client regarding the appropriate type and level of inspection, assessment and report (Service) for each dwelling. The type of Service will depend on factors including the circumstances of each property, the Service being provided, each individual case, client needs, the competence of the assessor and the agreed terms of engagement.

Special properties, such as protected structures and/or National Monuments, require a deeper technical assessment and consideration and therefore a Service with a conservation-focused element will be required for a retrofitting project.

4.4. Risks to occupants

Most SCSI members have been required to consider personal safety hazards that the property may present to occupiers and/or visitors when providing professional services including inspection, design and contract management for decades. Examples of incidents that have raised public awareness and prompted alterations to Building standards include Ronan Point (1968), Fishwick (2013) and Grenfell Tower (2017). Residential property retrofit Services and surveys do not include a formal assessment of statutory health and safety risks, for example, a Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS) process. However, matters that an SCSI member is aware of that present a personal hazard or safety risk to occupants or visitors, or could be reasonably anticipated in the future, for example, as a result of changes in the property arising from the retrofit installation, **should** be described in the Service. Where the likelihood and severity of the hazard is significant, advice regarding how the hazard can be reduced or completely removed should be included in the Service.

SCSI members should consider concisely listing the risks in a separate section of their assessment report with appropriate cross-referencing to where they appear in the report or at some other appropriate time during the project.

As these matters will reflect current Building standards, they will change over time.

The range of identified matters and appropriate action will be the same for all retrofit.

Where the retrofit Service is for a property that is currently let or is anticipated to be let, for example, by a private landlord or an AHB, the SCSI member should adjust the scope of the Service so the client can be properly advised on statutory risks and hazards to health and safety of occupants and others who may be harmed by the identified hazard. Services

An indicative, but not exhaustive, list of safety hazards has been included in Appendix D.

4.5. Legal matters

4.5.1. General

It is important to bear in mind that buildings do not exist in a vacuum. Provision of any retrofit Service will likely involve consideration of the legal interest in the property and in some cases, of the rights of adjoining owners, for example, party wall issues where external wall insulation is to be fixed on the wall between attached properties. The client's legal adviser may, therefore, be responsible for checking relevant legal documents but will not be familiar with the property. The SCSI member will be the 'eyes and ears' of the client's legal adviser and should identify apparent and specific items and features that have possible legal implications. It is unlikely the legal adviser will read all retrofit documents, such as assessments, designs, specifications or evaluation reports; therefore, the SCSI member **should** clearly highlight the relevant legal matters at the appropriate stages of the project and in an appropriate and timely manner. A separate legal section in the assessment report is an effective way of achieving this.

Where appropriate, if the situation noted can be physically resolved, the SCSI member will:

- at the property retrofit assessment (survey) stage: describe what needs to be done (for example, removing or improving unauthorised work)
- at the property retrofit design and specification stage: make appropriate alterations and allowance for the legal matters
- during building works and on contract completion: note any legal matters brought to their attention and make appropriate recommendations and
- during any project evaluation stage: make reasonable efforts to ensure all relevant parties are properly and fully informed.

At all stages of the project, the professionals carrying out the Service roles should ensure appropriate discussions take place regarding relevant legal matters between all interested parties. In all cases it is likely the client and/or occupier will likely need to be involved and informed. The main point of contact will likely be the retrofit coordinator. This will enable the client's legal adviser to explain to the client and/or others who may be affected in greater detail how these matters may affect obligations, rights, liabilities and ownership of the property.

4.5.2. Regulations

Typical regulatory matters will typically include:

- designated heritage assets status of the building itself or within its context, including land or sites; protected structures, conservation, national monuments, World Heritage Sites, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or protected wreck sites, ANOBs, national parks, SSSIs and need for appropriate consents, SAC.
- non-designated heritage assets; locally identified buildings, monuments, sites, places, areas or landscapes identified by plan-making bodies as having a degree of heritage significance but do not meet the criteria for designated heritage assets and the need for appropriate consents
- work done or to be done under the various 'competent persons' schemes
- statutory approvals; planning permissions and Building standards approvals for the proposed retrofit works, any associated alterations and repairs and any indemnity insurance policies for non-compliance (if known), smoke control zones (e.g. in connection with biomass EEMs), tree preservation orders (TPOs) or presence of protected species and need for appropriate consents/licences
- environmental matters, such as radon, presence of protected species and need for appropriate consents/licences or remediation certificates for previously contaminated sites and whether a mining report is required
- use of adjacent, significant public or private developments.

4.5.3. Guarantees

Although guarantees or warranties may be known at the beginning of the project, the SCSI member should ask the client or occupier whether any guarantees or warranties are available for any repair and alteration work previously carried out where practical. The SCSI member should record relevant details. It is the legal adviser's role to confirm the validity or transferability of these documents; however, known or suspected discrepancies identified by the SCSI member should be highlighted. The following examples are considered especially relevant:

- past extensions, 'room in the roof', previous retrofit installations, significant refurbishment of the property
- structural work, such as underpinning, removal of structural elements, lateral restraint and chimney stabilisation works
- timber and damp treatments
- wall ties and cavity wall tie replacement work
- new windows and doors
- cavity wall insulation
- installation and repair of service installations, e.g. MCS installation certificates and
- Japanese knotweed management plan and any associated warranty or guarantee.

Where the certification of a new-build or converted property is available, the SCSI member should try to establish the parts of the property to which this applies and verify the age of the property or conversion.

4.5.4. Other matters

The SCSI member should report to the client's legal adviser other features and issues that may have an impact on the property and require further investigation by the legal adviser. This will include a broad range of issues noted during the coordination process, assessment survey, at the design and specification stage, the retrofit installation works, during project evaluation or through the SCSI member's knowledge of the locality. See Appendix B for a list of these features and issues.

4.6. Energy matters

Concerns over climate change and legislative and commercial changes in the energy sector have created a demand for clear and objective guidance on energy matters. Consequently, accurate energy advice is of great value to clients and is fundamental to the retrofit process. The nature of this Service will be influenced by a range of factors that may change over time, for example, global, regional and national legislation and practice, the nature of the subject property and the competence and technical knowledge of the SCSI member.

For all retrofit Services, SCSI members **should** be able to identify and advise on defects and deficiencies caused by inappropriate energy efficiency measures implemented at the subject property and advise on the energy assessment of the dwelling (using DEAP, EnerPhit and other methodologies as required by the client in the agreed terms of engagement and/or the recommended documents).

In circumstances where the property is a special property, SCSI members **should** have the level of competence and technical knowledge to deliver the energy and associated advice required.

4.7. Providing building and EEM installation cost advice

It may be a requirement of the Service provided to provide a cost estimate of recommended repair, improvement and proposed retrofit works; prior to and/or during the works. Where this optional Service has been offered, the SCSI member **should** have the level of competence and technical knowledge to deliver it. They should clearly state all appropriate reservations and limitations associated with this function during the initial client enquiry and in the original terms of engagement.

For example, the SCSI member should explain the methodology used to calculate the estimates and tell the client the figures are for guidance only. The SCSI member should tell the client to get formal, written quotations from appropriately qualified contractors and carry out other due diligence, such as engaging the services of a chartered quantity surveyor or other suitably qualified person to negotiate a contract price and carry out associated works; all before entering into a building contract.

In circumstances where the Service involves a special property, SCSI members **should** have the level of competence and technical knowledge to deliver the advice required.

4.8. Further investigations

The SCSI member's knowledge will, at times, lead to a reasonable suspicion that a visible or suspected defect may affect other concealed property elements and could affect the retrofit service, for example, deteriorated mortar joints to the external leaf of a cavity wall possibly affecting inadequately galvanised steel wall ties. In these circumstances, an SCSI member **should** recommend that further investigation by a suitably qualified person be undertaken.

However, the SCSI member **should not** recommend further investigation just because a given property element is inaccessible. For example, where the covering of one roof slope cannot be seen from any reasonable vantage point, but on inspection there is no evidence of defect or deficiency in the roof void. In such cases, SCSI members

should inform the client, other professionals and relevant parties of the restriction and advise on the implications. The SCSi member should exercise professional judgment and **should** call for further investigations if and where necessary.

Where a further investigation is recommended, the SCSi member **should** provide the following information at the relevant time to the client, other professionals and relevant parties as part of the retrofit Service and/or report:

- a description of the affected element and why a further investigation is required, including the potential implications if such an investigation is not implemented.
- when the further investigation should be carried out and
- a broad indication of who should carry out the further investigation (for example, their qualifications, membership of an appropriate professional institution, trade body or competent person scheme).

4.9. Client liaison during the Service

At all stages of the Service, SCSi members **should** set aside adequate time to liaise with the client and discuss any part of the retrofit Service during and/or following delivery.

The amount of time, breadth and depth of the discussions will vary according to the Service being provided, the method of communication and the client's needs.

The SCSi member **should**:

- clearly explain the status of the discussion or exchange with the client at the beginning of the process
- not go beyond the scope already described in the agreed terms of engagement and
- keep a record of the exchange, which should be securely stored and accessible in compliance with current data protection legislation and regulations and section 4.12 of this standard.

4.10. Service Completion

Once the SCSi member's Service is complete and post-report delivery discussions with the client, other professionals and relevant parties are concluded, the SCSi member **should** make sure the project file is properly closed. Although this will depend on the SCSi member's own quality assurance procedures, it will usually involve assembling and updating all the relevant information and communications (whether hard copy or digital) and archiving in accordance with current practice. These should be securely stored and be available for future inspection if required.

4.11. Software and products

SCSi members should satisfy themselves that any software used to provide the retrofit Service and produce reports is in accordance with this professional standard to ensure quality assurance, consistency and transparency.

Until such systems are developed, SCSi members **should** include a statement, where appropriate, in any evaluation of a property's energy performance to confirm that while documents provided by existing assessment systems (for example, manufacturers' technical data and Trustmark ratings) may be included in the Service in acknowledgement that they have historically been a method of assessment and are in some cases referenced in the legal system) they may or may not be fully compliant with the above SCSi requirement.

4.12. Documentation storage and retention

SCSI members should manage all document storage processes associated with the Service rigorously and **should**:

- keep copies of all relevant information, including instructions, terms of engagement, project management discussions, records of inspection and further investigations, the final reports including any drawings, specifications, contract administration records, including variations and interim and final contract valuations, evaluation reports and recommendations and all correspondence (electronic, digital and hardcopy) in robust and securely protected backup systems
- keep a record of all verbal discussions with the client, tenant, other professionals and other relevant parties and share a summary of these discussions, subject to privacy legislation, when confirmation is required and
- ensure complete and clear records are retained.

All information collected and stored **should** conform to current data protection legislation and regulations. The file **should** be securely stored and retained in line with current legislation and the current edition of the [SCSI Conduct And Disciplinary Rules And Procedures](#).

Appendix A: Technical considerations for residential property retrofit Services

A professional Service involving the provision and fixing of EEM retrofit installations and associated works in residential properties requires significant knowledge, understanding, skill and competence, especially where the subject of the Service is a special property.

This professional standard and Appendix does not and cannot provide guidance covering all the necessary technical information required to provide such Services. However, it does confirm some of the main issues that **should** be considered during any residential retrofit project provided in accordance with the recommended documents and any other necessary guidance and, therefore, requiring:

- retrofit coordination by a retrofit coordinator
- retrofit assessment by a retrofit assessor
- retrofit design by a retrofit designer
- administering any contract for repairs and the retrofit installation works by a contract administrator and
- retrofit evaluation by a post-retrofit inspector.

The provision of such retrofit installations into existing dwellings will present a significant challenge to the design and surveying professions and the construction industry, given current and anticipated skill levels. Unless careful attention is paid to the necessary detail at all stages of the project, significant, costly and potentially hazardous defects will be built into hundreds of homes, with resultant negative effects on occupiers' well-being. SCSI members should be familiar with Technical Guidance Document L - Conservation of Fuel and Energy – Dwellings, S.R. 54:2014/A2:2022 and Improving Energy Efficiency in Traditional Buildings, Guidance for Specifiers and Installers.

Appendix B: Knowledge of general environmental issues in a locality

SCSI members providing a retrofit Service **should** be familiar with the nature and complexity of the locality in which the subject property is situated. This includes general environmental issues where the information is freely available to the public, often online. The nature, quality and accuracy of the data varies between suppliers and so SCSI members should treat this information with care. Although the range and nature of these issues will change over time, main considerations currently include:

- flooding (surface, river, groundwater, sea and reservoir), paying attention to the possibility that climate change may increase the propensity for local flash flooding
- radon, especially in relation to habitable rooms in underground spaces
- noise from transportation networks
- typical geological and soil conditions
- well-known but unique local and regional ground conditions
- landfill sites and relevant former industrial activities
- former and current mining and quarrying activities
- future, current or proposed infrastructure schemes and proposals
- planning areas (e.g. architectural conservation areas and other designated planning areas etc.)
- protected structure etc.
- general information about the site including exposure to wind and rain, height above sea level especially in coastal locations, risk of frost attack and unique local features including MICA and Pyrite characteristics that may affect the subject property.

This list is not prescriptive or exhaustive See the current edition of [RICS Environmental risks and global real estate](#).

Appendix C: Minimum requirements for all terms of engagement

Regardless of the agreed Service and Service role(s), the terms of engagement **should** address the following matters:

- the client's name, address and contact details
- the SCSi member's name (where known at the time of instruction), the RICS-regulated firm's name and contact details including address
- the subject property's address and postcode
- the nature and type(s) of Service type required
- the nature and intended future use of the property
- the details of any special instructions and/or additional Services
- the likely date when the Service will commence and the anticipated date of completion, including (if more than one Service role will be performed) the anticipated completion dates of each stage of the project (especially important if the project is likely to last over a period of years)
- the style and delivery format of the service
- the agreed fee and the fees for any additional work (including VAT)
- details of any referral fees, inducements and potential conflicts of interest
- the payment arrangements, payment period
- cancellation rights
- forewarning of any restrictions due to health and safety implications that may arise during inspection(s) of the property
- evidence that the client has confirmed acceptance of the terms and conditions
- confirmation that an SCSi member's files may be subject to monitoring and in such circumstances will need to be provided to SCSi on request
- confirmation that any fees taken in advance are not client money and not subject to the RICS Client Money Protection Scheme and
- that the SCSi member operates a complaints-handling procedure, details of which are available on request.

The content and nature of these matters will change over time and SCSi members **should** ensure the terms of engagement match the current legal requirements.

Appendix D: Risks to occupants – typical personal safety hazards in a residential property

Project management, assessment, inspection, design, specification, installation of retrofit Services and EEMs, contract administration and evaluation at any property in Ireland is likely to involve a significant number of properties that are let, many to Housing Associations. Such properties are potentially subject to special personal safety legislation, such as the MSRA, Housing Regulations 2019 standards and S.I 137/2019.

In addition, in performing their Service roles in relation to safety matters (but especially in the assessment, design, specification and contract administration of retrofit installations) SCSi members **should** have good working knowledge and awareness of:

- Building standards
- appropriate publicly available guidance, e.g. Technical Guidance Document K- Stairways, Ladders, Ramps and Guards in relation to falls from height on stairways, landings and balconies and glazing in critical locations and
- BSI codes of practice, European Standards and ISO Standards as appropriate.

Appendix E: Legal matters – other features and issues

SCSI members should include other features and issues that may have an impact on the subject property and may require further investigation, discussion and guidance from the legal adviser prior to, during and after a retrofit project. During all retrofit projects, SCSI members **should** be aware that most legal advisers do not visit the property and the SCSI member **should** act as the legal adviser's 'eyes and ears' and act as appropriate – see below and section 2.8 for further examples.

The following list (which is not exhaustive) illustrates possible issues for consideration and legal advice:

- the type of legal tenure (e.g. freehold or leasehold, etc.) and any rights and obligations, especially if onerous
- flying freeholds or submerged freeholds
- evidence of multiple occupations, tenancies, holiday lettings and Airbnb
- future use of the property
- evidence of possible trespass and rights of way
- arrangements for private services, etc.
- evidence of rights of way and maintenance or repairing liabilities for private access roads and footways,
- other property rights including rights of light, restrictions to occupation, tenancies, easements, servitudes, and wayleaves.
- boundary problems including poorly defined site boundaries, repairs of and works affecting party walls, party wall agreements; and works in progress on the subject property and/or on adjoining owner's land.
- details of any building insurance claims
- parking permits
- presence of protected species (e.g. bats, etc.)
- Japanese knotweed and other invasive species and
- previous SEAI grant-aided measures, feed-in tariffs and roof leases.



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