# AECB Silver Standard – for low energy homes with a high degree of confidence

The Silver Standard has been developed by the AECB to help designers, builders and selfbuilders achieve high-performance buildings. A building designed or refurbished to Silver Standard could achieve CO2 emissions reductions of around 70% compared to a standard building – yet the methods and materials recommended are straightforward to use, and don’t cost much more, if anything, than conventional building.

AECB offers advice and sample details to help designers:

* avoid thermal bridges - which not only leak heat, but risk causing cold spots inside the building
* achieve good airtightness and good standards of ventilation
* ensure that the building makes good use of solar gain, (but does not overheat, or create too many cool, glazed surfaces that might lead to discomfort in winter)

To help keep Silver certification fees as low as possible the Standard can be self-certified by key members of the project team – this would typically be done, for example, by a suitably qualified energy consultant. The evidence-based certification requires the project team to demonstrate that the details of the building have been designed and built in a way that will genuinely deliver good standards of energy efficiency, by supplying drawings, photographs, specifications and other documentation. AECB Silver certification is based upon the same principles of quality assurance as the Passivhaus Standard (the key differences being the relaxation in the space heat demand and airtightness requirements). Note: the Primary Energy limit is the same as for Passivhaus. For this reason Certified Passivhaus Consultants and Designers (CEPH) are deemed to have adequate understanding of the quality assurance requirements of building design and energy modelling. The AECB recommends that clients apply greater caution when using other energy consultants.

Self-certification as used in the AECB Silver Standard is not as expensive as some other certification (as used for example by BREEAM or Passivhaus), but nonetheless offers the purchaser a good level of assurance that the building will perform as intended. Many conventional buildings consume far more energy than they are intended to (it is not unusual for heat loss to be double that predicted by designers in mainstream building)[[1]](#footnote-1). Opting for this affordable Standard represents great potential for helping to avoid this kind of disappointment.

A summary of the AECB Silver Standard and process for certification can be found at

[www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/energy-performance-standards/](http://www.aecb.net/carbonlite/carbonlite-programme/energy-performance-standards/)

1. Evaluating the impact of an enhanced energy performance standard on load bearing masonry

   domestic construction. Lessons from Stamford Brook. Partners in Innovation Project, C1 39/3/663 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)