

NHER Plan Assessor Version 6.0 Release Notes

New features in this version

NHER Plan Assessor 6.0 incorporates the update to SAP2012 and Part L 2013 (England). In addition to this we have added several new features to NHER Plan Assessor to increase the usability of the software. The main new features are summarised below and those marked ‘*’ are explained in more detail in the **User guide** appended to these release notes.

- Updated calculation engine to SAP2012
- Shows compliance to Part L 2013 (England)
- New Thermal Bridging screen
- Storage heaters from PCDF
- Controls from PCDF
- Community heating schemes from PCDF
- Ductwork from PCDF
- Primary Pipework
- Storage WWHRs
- Additional items for PV and solar
- Batch ‘Save as new version’*
- Company logo can now be displayed on reports*
- Improvements to notes*
- Extra reports added to batch save
- Improvements to Groups*
- Option to apply automatic assessor filter*

Importing records from previous versions of Plan Assessor

From 6th April all new build EPCs for England and Wales will need to be issued using Plan Assessor 6.0. You can transfer a record from version 5.4.2 and 5.5.x into version 6 using XML export/import. If you wish to issue an EPC for a version 4.5 record then it will need to be imported into version 5.4.2/5.5.x before being taken into version 6.0.

Note: There is no database import facility for version 6.0 (this is something we will introduce into a future version of PA6).

This table summarises which version of Plan Assessor the different regions should use for Building Regulation submissions and EPC lodgement.

| Region | EPC | Building Regs |
|-----------|-------|---------------|
| England | 6.x | 6.x |
| Wales | 6.x | 5.x |
| Scotland | 5.5.x | 5.x |
| N Ireland | 5.5.x | 5.5.x |

New Thermal Bridging screen

SAP2012 sees the introduction of 19 additional junctions for the Thermal Bridging calculation. With this in mind we have redesigned the screen making it more flexible and allowing you to add multiple junctions of the same type. We have produced a short video showing the new features of the Thermal Bridging screen which can be viewed [here](#).

Rooflights & Dormers in Plan Assessor 6.0

At the time of writing the conventions for the new Thermal Bridging junctions have not been finalised. We are expecting clarification on how rooflights and dormer windows are to be dealt with and for the time being E1-E4 will be auto-populated with openings from all window types.

In the meantime we recommend the following approach:

1. Enter all the standard openings (not the roof lights or dormers)
2. On the thermal bridging screen select auto populate to populate the TB lengths for the openings
3. Then un-tick the auto populate box – the lengths remain
4. Go back to openings and add in the roof lights and dormers
5. On the thermal bridging screen - add new junctions E1-E4 for the roof lights

6. Add dormer bridging lengths to R1-R3.

Once the conventions are issued we will be able to improve the software to better accommodate auto-populated junctions for the different types of openings.

Storage heaters from PCDF

High heat retention storage heaters can now be selected from the Product Database. When you select a Storage Heater as the system type you can now select an efficiency source of either SAP default or Product database.

Heating system

Type: Storage heaters

Efficiency source: Product database [Select product from the database](#)

It is possible to select up to 4 different types of storage heater from the Product Database. When you click the *Select product from the database* link you will be presented with a screen which allows you to *Add* multiple storage heater types and declare the number of heaters of each type.

| | Index | Brand | Model | High heat retention | Number of heaters |
|--------|--------|---|--------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Delete | 497101 | Test storage heaters Example storage heater | size 1 | Yes | 2 |
| Delete | 497103 | Test storage heaters Example storage heater | size 3 | Yes | 2 |
| Add | | | | | |
| Add | | | | | |

OK Cancel

Note: at the time of writing there are no storage heaters in the Product Database.

Controls from PCDF

There is a new type of Time and Temperature control system which uses programmable and communicating room thermostats. These are applicable to wet systems and must be selected from the Product Database.

For wet systems you will notice that there are now 2 Time and Temperature controls:

- Time and temperature control –plumbing circuit (This is as per SAP2009)
- Time and temperature control – database (this is the new type using programmable or communicating TRVs)

Controls

Controls Time and temperature zone control - from database Database Details

Community heating schemes from PCDF

The Product Database now contains details of community heating schemes. This allows the software to use more accurate efficiency, heat fractions and distribution losses for particular schemes.

To choose a scheme from the database, set *Community system from product database* to *Yes* then click on the *Select system from the database* link.

SPACE HEATING

Overview System 1 System 2 **Community** Secondary

Community system from product database Yes [Select system from the database](#)

Heat sources

| Type | Fuel | Fraction | Efficiency | Heat to Power |
|------|------|----------|------------|---------------|
| | | | | |

[Add](#) [Edit](#) [Delete](#)

Note: At the time of writing there are no community heating schemes present within the PCDF.

Duct insulation from PCDF

It is now possible to select semi-rigid duct systems from the PCDF. When you select a MEV using heat recovery you are able to choose a duct source of either *Default* or *Database*. When you select *Database* you will be able to click the *Database* button and search the PCDF.

Mechanical ventilation

Mechanical ventilation Balanced (with heat recovery) MV Database

System values from Product database MV Details

Is installer approved Yes

Number of wet rooms Kitchen + 3 additional wet rooms

Duct type

Duct source Database Duct Database

Duct insulation Insulated ductwork

Note: At the time of writing there are no semi-rigid duct systems in the PCDF.

Primary Pipework insulation

There are now 4 options for Primary Pipework insulation:

- Uninsulated
- First 1m from cylinder insulated

- All accessible pipework insulated
- Fully insulated primary pipework

In heated space

Primary pipework insulation **Fully insulated**

Heat exchanger area m²

**Store vol net of solar store vol (combined stores only)*

Storage WWHRS

There are now 2 types of WWHRS to choose from, instantaneous and storage. Instantaneous WWHRS are the type that were included in SAP2009, whereas Storage WWHRS are a new type. Storage WWHRS work in a similar way to Instantaneous WWHRS with the key difference being that they do not require simultaneous waste and pre-heated water flow which means they can recover heat from bath water. They also incorporate a storage volume.

Waste water heat recovery system

Has WWHRS **Storage**

[Details](#)

There are two types of Storage WWHRS:

- Combined: where there is a dedicated storage volume within the hot water cylinder
- Separate: with a separate dedicated cylinder

You are required to capture the following information:

- Total number of baths and showers - any type, whether or not their waste water is routed through the WWHRS. A shower over a bath counts as one, not two
- Number of baths and showers – where the waste is routed through the WWHRS. A shower over a bath counts as one, not two
- Dedicated WWHRS storage volume

NHER Plan Assessor

WWHRS

General

[Select from database](#) [Clear details](#)

Total number of baths and ANY shower with or without WWHRS

Number of baths and showers with a WWHRS

Dedicated WWHRS storage volume litres

OK Cancel

Additional items for PV and solar

Solar thermal and PV systems each have an additional data item to enter. For solar this is the type of shower that is present within the building (either, electric, non-electric, both or none).

The screenshot shows a form with the following fields:

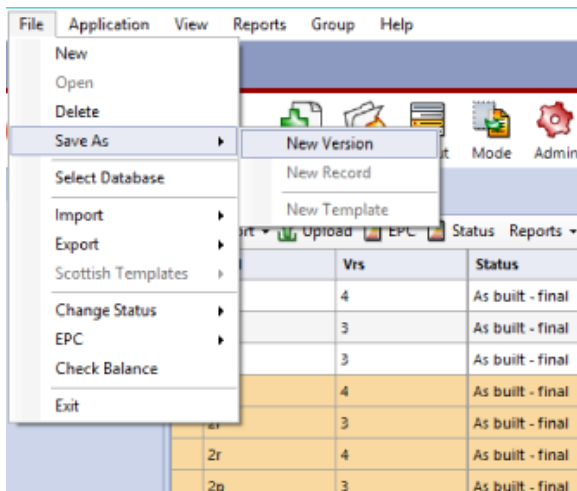
- Is solar store combined: Yes (dropdown)
- Dedicated solar store volume: 50 litres (text input)
- Solar circulating pump: Electric powered (dropdown)
- Showers present: Electric shower(s) (dropdown)

The 'Showers present' field and its dropdown menu are circled in red.

For PV you are asked whether the PV system is linked to the landlords supply or connected to the dwelling. If the system is connected to the landlord supply then no benefit is given towards the SAP rating, however the Carbon savings are reflected in the EI and DER calculation.

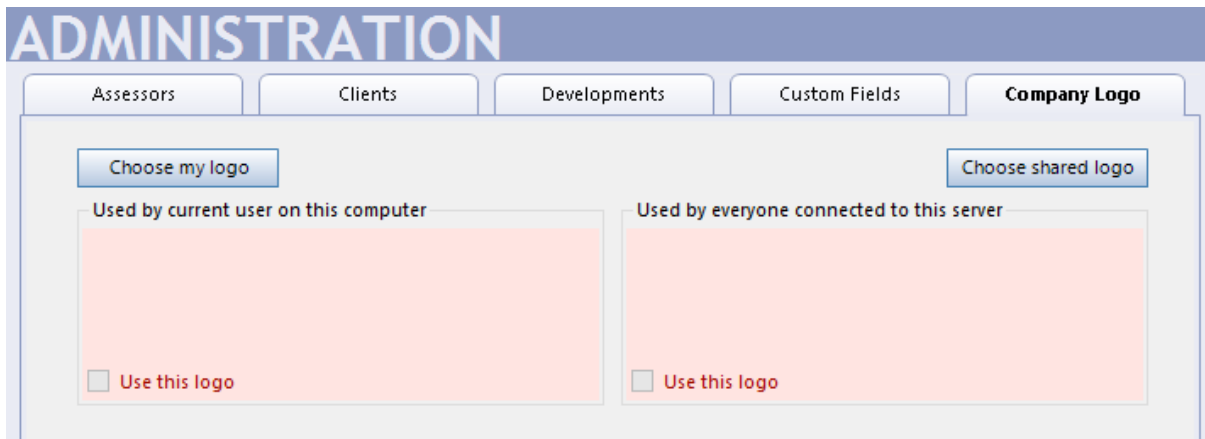
Batch 'Save as new version'

It is now possible to 'Save as new version' for multiple records. More information on how to do this is contained within the user guide.



Company logo can now be displayed on the report

You are now able to include your company logo on all of the reports produced by Plan Assessor. This can be a logo stored on your local machine or a shared logo that is used by all assessors connected to the SQL server. The company logo can be selected from the *Admin* screen.



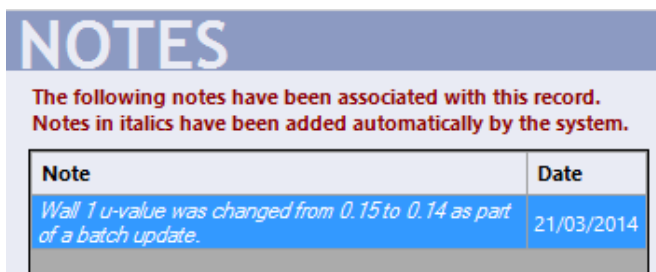
More information on how to use this feature can be found within the user guide.

Improvements to notes

The new notes icon now shows the number of notes that have been made against the record.



In addition to this whenever a batch update is performed an automatic note is added to the records affected.

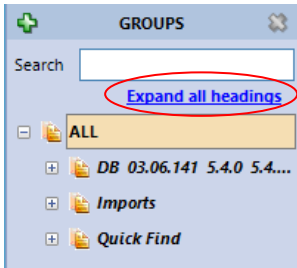


Extra reports added to batch save

The data input and Notional Dwelling TER, DFEE and TFEE worksheets can now be produced as part of a batch save of reports.

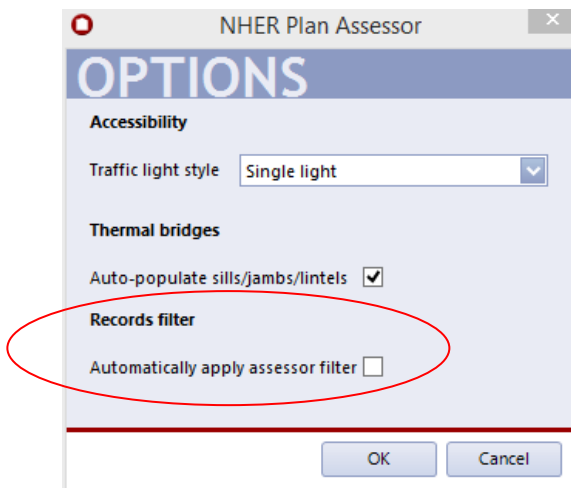
Improvements to Groups

We have added an option which allows you to collapse or expand all headings that you have created. We have also improved the sensitivity of the search field to include any Headings as well as Groups.



Option to apply automatic assessor filter

It is now possible to configure whether you wish the automatic assessor filter to be applied when a database is opened. By default the automatic filter is turned off. This option can be configured in the Applications > Options screen.



Bugs fixed in this version

- It is now possible to produce batch reports for community heating records.
- We have fixed a bug which caused the Product Database manager to freeze.

Known issues and limitations

Plan Assessor 6.0 has the following known issues:

- It is possible to cause an 'unhandled exception' on the Thermal Bridging screen by following these particular steps:
 - Enter a length into a junction
 - Press the *Tab* key once
 - Click the *Close* icon
 - Click *Yes* to save the record
 - An unhandled exception will occur and the Thermal Bridging screen will appear blank
 - If you close the record and reopen it you will not have lost any data

The work around for this is to either;

- Press the *Tab* button twice before closing from the Thermal Bridging screen
- If you continue onto any other data entry screen you will not encounter the problem
- The 'Export to Excel' function does not currently display the energy requirements. We will resolve this for version 6.1.
- The Upload Reports feature is currently not working and will be fixed in the next release.

Users should be aware of the following limitations of this first release:

- There is no version 5 Database importer meaning records can only be imported into version 6 using XMLs
- Only version 5.4.2 and 5.5.x XMLs can be imported into version

Help system

The Plan Assessor Help system is currently being replaced with an online system that will enable refinements and additions outside of a software release. If you try to access the Help system via the Help menu or using F1 you will initially see 'Under Construction'. The updated content will become available in stages.

BRE Approval of version 6.0.x

The Building Research Establishment (BRE) has approved version 6.0.x of NHER Plan Assessor. This approvals process covers the following:

- Calculation of the Energy Efficiency (SAP) and Environmental Impact (EI) ratings
- Calculation of the Target Emissions Rate (TER), the Dwelling Emissions Rate (DER), the Target Fabric Energy Efficiency (TFEE) and the Dwelling Fabric Energy Efficiency (DFEE) as defined in Approved Document L1A 2013 Edition (England).
- Calculation of energy use

- Provision of appropriate outputs in electronic and paper form:
 - summary of all input data to the calculation
 - SAP & EI, DER, TER, DFEE and TFEE worksheet reports (for England)
 - Energy Performance Certificates (SAP 2012 EPCs)
 - Building Regulations Compliance Report (for England)