

November 2023

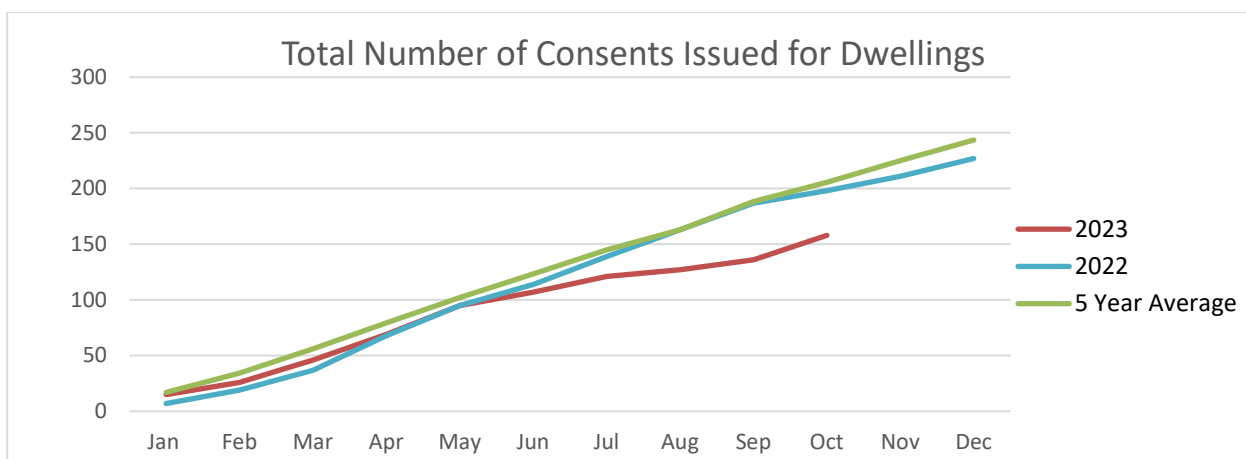
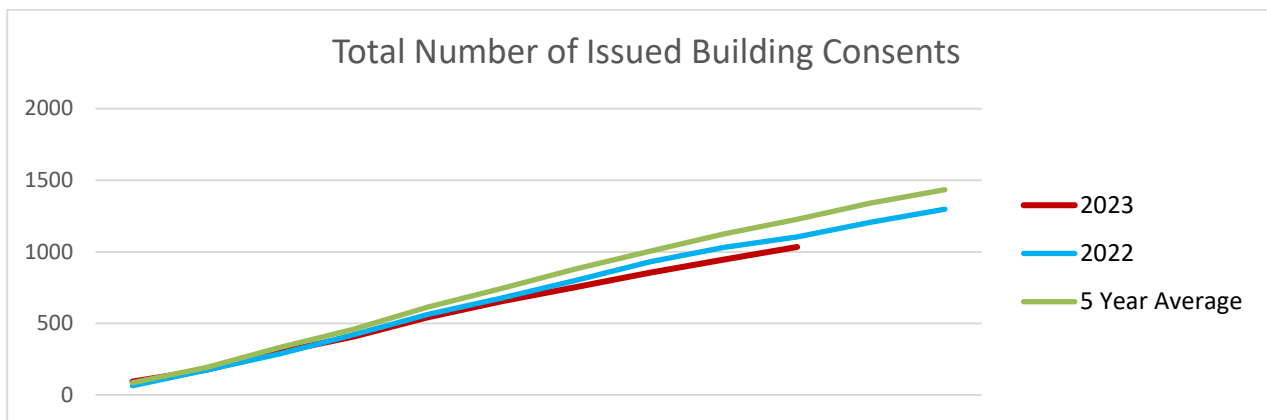
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The demand on the building and construction industry in Marlborough has cooled over the last couple of months. Historically there has been a slowdown corresponding to election time. This trend isn't just about the anticipation of the election day but extends to a six-month window around it.

As there is still some uncertainty about interest rates and lending, which hopefully should return to some normality soon which will give the industry more certainty about the future. Despite the slowdown it is not all doom and gloom, as there is still quite a bit of activity in the commercial sector with many projects under construction which will see out this year and extend into next year.

Without doubt the residential sector has seen the biggest slowdown in activity but with more certainty with a new government and with a bit of luck we have seen the peak of interest rates it is hoped activity will increase in the new year.

The building industry in Marlborough is largely influenced by the wine industry, and a result is not subject to the volatility that the rest of the country has experienced. It will be interesting to see how next year pans out for Marlborough and the rest of the country.



# Changes to the Building Code

The Ministry of Business Innovation and Employment has recently published updates to a series of changes to the building code. The changes that have occurred are:

## Protection from fire

The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE) has amended Acceptable Solutions C/AS1, C/AS2, F7/AS1 and Verification Method C/VM2 to improve the safety of people from fire. We have cited new versions of standards for the design of sprinkler systems, fire alarm systems, interconnected smoke alarms and smoke control in air-handling systems.



The amended Acceptable Solutions C/AS1 and C/AS2 now cite NZS 4514: 2021 for the installation of interconnected smoke alarms to improve the fire safety in new residential homes.

- [F7/AS1 - Warning systems](#)
- [C/AS1 - Protection from fire for buildings with sleeping \(residential\) and outbuildings \(risk group SH\)](#)
- [C/AS2 - Acceptable Solution for Buildings other than Risk Group SH](#)

The transition period for these changes is 12 months, ending on 1 November 2024.

## Plumbing and drainage

MBIE has amended the acceptable solutions and verification methods for E1 Surface Water, G12 Water Supplies, and G13 Foul Water. These changes support the provision of plumbing and drainage services which comply with the Building Code and help meet the safety and wellbeing objectives in the Building Act 2004.

These changes are the latest in a series of continuous improvements to ensure the Building Code compliance pathways for the plumbing sector are fit for purpose and up to date. Updates like these ensure New Zealanders have safe and reliable plumbing systems.

Changes to Acceptable Solution G12/AS1 include measures to lower the maximum hot water temperature delivered at the tap for most buildings from 55°C to 50°C and the introduction of additional temperature control devices to give plumbers more ways to limit hot water temperatures. These changes do not apply to the hot water used for kitchen or laundries nor do they apply to the temperature of hot water in the storage tank. The changes apply only to personal hygiene taps and baths in new buildings and new plumbing work. The G12/AS1 update also includes reducing the lead content in plumbing products.

- [E1 - Surface Water \[PDF 2.1MB\]](#)
- [G12 - Water Supplies \[PDF 3.2MB\]](#)

- [G13 - Foul Water \[PDF 3.2MB\]](#)

The transition period for these changes is 12 months, ending on 1 November 2024 with the exception of lead in plumbing. This will have an extended transition date until 1 September 2025.

## Plumbing and drainage standards

Key to these amendments is the adoption of the latest version of the AS/NZS 3500 plumbing and drainage standards as part of the compliance pathways. MBIE participated in the development of these standards. The new versions of the standards include a number of New Zealand-specific requirements meaning that several of the previous New Zealand Building Code modifications to the standards are no longer required. These standards are cited as compliance pathways in several acceptable solutions.

- [AS/NZS 3500.1:2021 Plumbing and drainage, Part 1: Water services](#)
- [AS/NZS 3500.2:2021 Plumbing and drainage, Part 2: Sanitary plumbing and drainage](#) -
- [AS/NZS 3500.3:2021 Plumbing and drainage, Part 3: Stormwater drainage](#) -
- [AS/NZS 3500.4:2021 Plumbing and drainage, Part 4: Heated water services](#) -

## Structure

MBIE has modified the citation of the New Zealand Standard NZS 3101.1: 2006 within B1/VM1 Paragraph 3.1.1. The change deletes Clause 18.7.4.4 of this Standard from the verification method and means that the use of the standard for the design of the supports of hollow-core floors is now considered to be an alternative solution.

This change to B1/VM1 comes into effect on 2 November 2023, with no transition period.

# H1 Energy Efficiency

The Building Group continues to get queries about the changes to H1 Energy Efficiency that were introduced on the 01<sup>st</sup> May. From the queries that have been asked over recent months it appears that there is still some uncertainty about the changes.

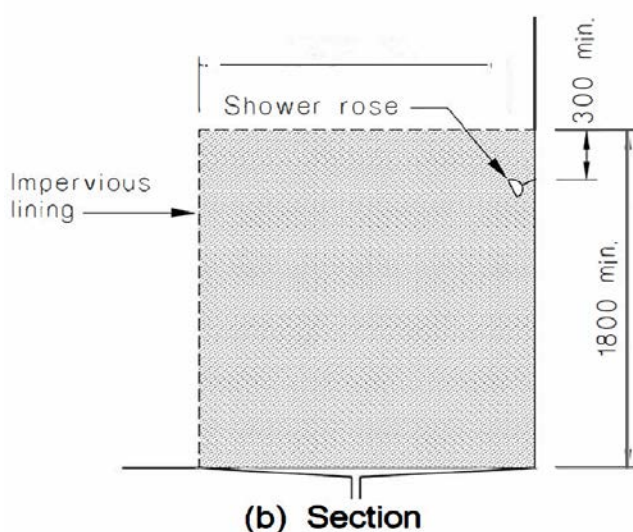
Branz have a huge number of resources in relation to H1. These following resources can be accessed free of charge. They include:

- [BU685 Insulation of concrete slab-on-ground floors less than 300 M<sup>2</sup>](#)
- [BU684 Thermal modelling tools for houses](#)
- [BU682 Specifying glazing](#)
- [BU680 Insulating glass units \(IGUs\)](#)
- [BU678 H1 Calculation method - housing, and buildings up to 300 m<sup>2</sup> \(2022\)](#)
- [BU677 Specifying roofs under H1 \(2022\)](#)
- [BU676 Complying with H1 - housing, and buildings up to 300 metres squared \(2022\)](#)
- [BU672 Specifying floors under H1 \(2022\)](#)

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## Wetfloor showers and Bathrooms – Building Code Clause E3

We have encountered several issues with the tanking/waterproofing of wetfloor showers. The acceptable solution E3 AS/1 clause 3.3.2.1 states 'When enclosures, such as walls, screens, doors, or curtains are used they shall be continuous from floor level or top of up stand to 1800 mm minimum above floor level and not less than 50 mm above the shower rose. Please remember if the acceptable solution has been used a means of compliance the tanking membrane must extend 50mm above the shower rose. The tanking membrane needs to extend 50mm above the shower rose in a dump/rain shower. Hence some thought is needed when specifying and installing the tanking when a dump/rain shower is proposed.





## Sewer Drains

There have been recent issues with gravels and large stones blocking and damaging sewer pumps, primarily in those areas of the newer sub-divisions.

According to Council Service Department the obvious cause of this issue drainlayers allowing material to enter the pipework at point of connection or when laying pipes within property.

In some cases, it is months after a stone has entered the network before it can cause an issue with pipe/ pump blockages and possible overflows. Stones can very easily damage a pump and are expensive to fix.

Drainlayers please ensure that material is not entering Council sewers when pipework is been installed.



*Material recently found in Council sewer pumps.*

## Ross Kain

The Building Control team was extremely saddened that Ross Kain passed away after a short battle with cancer in early November. Ross was employed as a Building Control Officer with the Marlborough District Council since 2007. Previously to his employment at Council Ross worked for many years as a commercial builder at Robinson Construction.

Ross was well respected by all his colleagues and by the trade. He had a great approach when carrying out inspections ensuring he focused on critical components rather than minor details. Ross had a great work ethic and high productivity. When the team was under pressure due to workloads Ross was our go to man to get things done. Ross would often be found working after hours and into weekends to ensure that he got building consents processed to meet customers' expectations.

Those that new Ross would know that he was a very keen fisherman. Most weekends when the weather allowed, Ross would be fishing. Whether it be whitebaiting, floundering or line fishing for gurnard and snapper at Okiwi Bay, Ross was a happy man when he was on the water. Ross was also a keen vegetable gardener, weather watcher and loved following and watching sport.

Ross will be deeply missed by the Building Control team and our deepest sympathies go to his wife Anthea, son Cameron, daughter Claire and all his extended family and friends.

On a personal note, Ross and I had a close connection as our passion for fishing has seen us spend countless hours discussing the finer points of fishing. I have been lucky enough go on numerous whitebaiting, fishing, floundering adventures with Ross. Not only have I lost a colleague but a good friend as well.



## Staff Changes

### New Building Control Officer - Nisha Shaji

Nisha has changed her role within the Building Group. Previously, Nisha was employed as a compliance officer. Her new role as Building Control Officer will commence in the New Year. Nisha comes from an engineering background and has worked for Council since 2021. Nisha will start her role as a Building Control Officer in the New Year and has some training to complete before you will see her out in the field which will be sometime next year.



## Resignation

As of 30 November, I have resigned from Council. I have worked in the Building Group for 16 years and being manager since 2021. Although at times the role has been challenging as there have been all sorts of hurdles along the journey, I have thoroughly enjoyed working with Building Control Group.

I have been privileged to work with a great team which has made my role relatively easy, I can't thank the team enough for all the work dedication and support that they have provided over the years. I would especially like to thank Bill East. Bill who has been a huge help, providing guidance and mentoring through some challenging times. I would also like to thank the senior team Jeff Atkinson and Dhyanom Gala who have been a huge support to me since becoming manager. Dhyanom will be acting manager until a replacement is found and I know Dhyanom will do a great job as acting manager.

As my role as manager, I get to interact with other Building Consent Authorities around the country and from those interactions I can honestly say that the Marlborough Building Team is punching well above its weight and that is something that the team should be very proud of. The same can also be said for the trade industry in Marlborough. We have a huge amount of talented tradespeople in Marlborough and with my dealings with the Master Builder Apprentice of the Year I have met some outstanding apprentices who have and are continuing to come through the ranks. It is so important that as an industry we continue to invest in the future.

I understand as well as anyone that sometimes the legislation and bureaucracy which can create frustration; however, it is the framework that we all must work within. At the end of the day, we are all in this industry together with the result we are trying to achieve is that buildings throughout their life are fit for purpose.

I would just like to take this opportunity to thank the industry for the support and cooperation during my time as manager.

Thank You

Brendon Robertson