# Homeowner's energy rating correction highlights flaws in EPC system



A homeowner in west London has voiced frustration and confusion after his property’s energy performance rating was incorrectly downgraded despite significant investment in green home improvements. Michael De Podesta, who owns a 1920s semi-detached house in Teddington, spent approximately £60,000 installing energy-efficient features including solar panels, triple glazing, external insulation, and a heat pump. Initially, his home was rated a B on the Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) scale—an indicator of relatively high energy efficiency. However, a subsequent EPC assessment wrongly downgraded the property’s rating to a C, causing bewilderment for Mr De Podesta, a chartered physicist who described his home as “extraordinarily efficient” to run, with heating bills as low as £160 annually. After publicising the issue, the assessing company, Compass Property Projects, acknowledged its error, refunded Mr De Podesta, and reinstated the B rating. A further survey confirmed the home should actually hold an A rating.

EPCs have been a requirement since 2007 in the UK, rating properties from A (most efficient) to G (least efficient) primarily to guide energy efficiency for buyers, renters, and landlords. These certificates are crucial as they are mandatory documents for selling or renting homes and increasingly impact regulatory compliance. For example, new government regulations mandate that all rented properties achieve at least a C rating by 2028 for new tenancies and by 2030 for all tenancies. Despite these regulations, the EPC system itself has come under heavy scrutiny for inaccuracies and inconsistencies.

Industry experts widely acknowledge the EPC regime is flawed. Stuart Fairlie, CEO of Elmhurst Energy—an organisation that operates EPC assessment software—said errors are common, with his company receiving hundreds of complaints. According to Fairlie, the methodology is outdated and overly simplified, notably placing disproportionate weight on the cost of heating fuels rather than actual energy efficiency. He hopes the government will update the methodology “next year” to better reflect real-world performance. He also emphasises that many errors stem from a lack of understanding or education among assessors, although some mistakes are honest human errors.

Consumer groups such as Which? have extensively investigated the reliability of EPCs and consistently found that many certificates include incorrect or misleading information. Their research revealed that the certificates often fail to accurately represent a home's energy efficiency, which can result in costly and ineffective decisions by homeowners, tenants, landlords, and policymakers alike. Which? calls for a comprehensive overhaul of the EPC system to ensure ratings are trustworthy and practically useful. The Guardian and The Telegraph have also highlighted that EPC inaccuracies have led people to invest heavily in energy upgrades without seeing expected improvements reflected in their official ratings.

Compounding the issue is public awareness, or lack thereof. Research indicates that around 43% of UK homeowners are unaware of their property’s EPC rating, and 18% do not understand what the rating signifies. This gap in knowledge is concerning, especially in light of tightening energy efficiency regulations for rental properties. Landlords face particular challenges due to the EPC flaws, with some calling for financial support to meet increasingly stringent standards under an imperfect regime.

The Department for Housing, Communities and Local Government remains in the process of reviewing consultation responses about the future of EPCs and associated regulations. A spokesperson confirmed the government is still working through submissions and has not yet implemented any significant reforms or changes to the EPC methodology.

Michael De Podesta’s case underscores a broader systemic issue: the current EPC system often fails to accurately reflect real energy performance, undermining confidence in these certificates just as they become more critical in housing regulations. Until the government acts decisively to reform and modernise EPC assessments, both property owners and tenants may continue to face uncertainty and frustration over the reliability of energy efficiency ratings.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://ca.news.yahoo.com/homes-energy-rating-downgraded-despite-070829612.html)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://ca.news.yahoo.com/homes-energy-rating-downgraded-despite-070829612.html), [[6]](https://thebla.co.uk/landlords-need-financial-help-to-implement-flawed-epcs/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://ca.news.yahoo.com/homes-energy-rating-downgraded-despite-070829612.html), [[4]](https://www.ggf.org.uk/myglazing/news/six-million-uk-homeowners-dont-know-their-propertys-epc-rating/), [[6]](https://thebla.co.uk/landlords-need-financial-help-to-implement-flawed-epcs/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://ca.news.yahoo.com/homes-energy-rating-downgraded-despite-070829612.html), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/money/article/2024/jun/18/energy-performance-certificates-unreliable-which-epc), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/money/bills/energy/household-energy-efficiency-ratings-inaccurate-misleading/), [[5]](https://thenegotiator.co.uk/news/regulation-law-news/home-epc-ratings-often-wrong-consumer-group-claims/), [[7]](https://www.which.co.uk/news/article/the-problem-with-energy-performance-certificates-a9oer6w1bgEl)
* Paragraph 5 – [[4]](https://www.ggf.org.uk/myglazing/news/six-million-uk-homeowners-dont-know-their-propertys-epc-rating/), [[6]](https://thebla.co.uk/landlords-need-financial-help-to-implement-flawed-epcs/)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://ca.news.yahoo.com/homes-energy-rating-downgraded-despite-070829612.html), [[2]](https://www.theguardian.com/money/article/2024/jun/18/energy-performance-certificates-unreliable-which-epc), [[3]](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/money/bills/energy/household-energy-efficiency-ratings-inaccurate-misleading/), [[5]](https://thenegotiator.co.uk/news/regulation-law-news/home-epc-ratings-often-wrong-consumer-group-claims/)

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## Bibliography

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3. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/money/bills/energy/household-energy-efficiency-ratings-inaccurate-misleading/> - A report by Which? claims that EPCs, which rate properties from A to G based on energy efficiency, are often inaccurate and misleading. The consumer group calls for a radical overhaul of the EPC system, highlighting that many homeowners have spent significant amounts on energy-efficient upgrades based on potentially flawed information. ([telegraph.co.uk](https://www.telegraph.co.uk/money/bills/energy/household-energy-efficiency-ratings-inaccurate-misleading/?utm_source=openai))
4. <https://www.ggf.org.uk/myglazing/news/six-million-uk-homeowners-dont-know-their-propertys-epc-rating/> - Research reveals that 43% of UK homeowners are unaware of their property's EPC rating, equating to approximately six million individuals. The study also found that 18% do not understand the purpose of an EPC rating. This lack of awareness is concerning, especially with upcoming regulations requiring rental properties to have a minimum EPC rating of C by 2025. ([ggf.org.uk](https://www.ggf.org.uk/myglazing/news/six-million-uk-homeowners-dont-know-their-propertys-epc-rating/?utm_source=openai))
5. <https://thenegotiator.co.uk/news/regulation-law-news/home-epc-ratings-often-wrong-consumer-group-claims/> - Consumer group Which? asserts that EPCs are often inaccurate and require urgent reform. The group highlights that the metrics used in many EPCs may be misleading, leading to decisions based on inaccurate information by homeowners, tenants, landlords, and policymakers. ([thenegotiator.co.uk](https://thenegotiator.co.uk/news/regulation-law-news/home-epc-ratings-often-wrong-consumer-group-claims/?utm_source=openai))
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