



## CIB NEWS ARTICLE

International Council for Research and Innovation  
in Building and Construction

Providing a global network for international exchange and cooperation in research and innovation in building and construction, in support of an improved building process and of improved performance of the built environment.

August 2008

### CIB Encouraged Journal

## Building Research & Information

### Special Issue on Re-Defining Comfort



Editor Richard Lorch is delighted to announce the publication of a special issue of Building Research and Information: *Comfort in a Lower Carbon Society*, guest edited by Elizabeth Shove, Heather Chappells and Loren Lutzenhiser.

#### Papers in this Special Issue

The papers in this special issue make explicit the theoretical underpinnings of how we understand comfort, and how these have evolved in the past. They make clear the role of manufacturers, designers, scientists and policy makers in generating current paradigms of comfort, enabling us to engage with the challenge of mitigating climate change head on. An effective lower carbon society must find new ways of thinking about the dynamic relationship between people, buildings and the wider environment.

An understanding of these impacts demands a debate that accepts the possibility of exploiting the flexibility of peoples' relationship with the weather, both indoor and out - in the current energy framework, individual expectations are met, not engaged with. In order to achieve change, we must understand how we interact with our environment - only then can we work with the concept of how to achieve comfort in a lower carbon environment.

This special issue of the BRI provides a context for the first steps towards the evolutionary transformation of our personal environment.

Comfort in a Lower Carbon Society (vol 36 no 4, July 2008) provides a sound body of knowledge on the questions of comfort in existing and new buildings. In particular, it addresses:

- the infrastructure of the indoors and how this might change - the politics of technology and design, and how concepts of comfort evolve;
- the dangers of homogenous conceptions of comfort in a translation to a lower-carbon society;
- the need to reframe our understanding of comfort if we are to address the requisite transformation of our personal environments;
- how concepts of comfort can be affected by social and cultural practices especially building design;
- the significance of adaptive behaviours to handle climate extremes and especially for reducing vulnerability;
- the impact of supply and demand on energy consumption, especially in relation to existing networks of distribution;
- the impact of technology on consumer perceptions of expected comfort, and the difficulty of purely market-based transformation from current frameworks.



## Articles in this Special Issue

In this special issue (free to download):

EDITORIAL *Comfort in a lower carbon society* (free to download) - E Shove, H Chappells, L Lutzenhiser and B Hackett

*Air-conditioning and the 'homogenization' of people and built environments* - S Healy

*Re-contextualizing the notion of comfort* - R J Cole, J Robinson, Z Brown and M O'Shea

*Conquering winter: US consumers and the cast-iron stove* - H J Harris

*Growth in mobile air-conditioning: a socio-technical research agenda* - G Parkhurst & R Parnaby

*Understanding heat wave vulnerability in nursing and residential homes* - S Brown & G Walker

*Escaping the house: comfort and the California garden* - G Cooper

*Comfort expectations: the impact of demand-management strategies in Australia* - Y Strengers

The papers are available from the journals website [www.rbri.co.uk](http://www.rbri.co.uk)

or directly from the Table of Contents

[www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=g794016402~db=all](http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=g794016402~db=all)

## Journal Information

### Aims and Scope

Building Research & Information (BRI) is a leading international refereed journal focussed on buildings and their supporting systems. Unique to BRI is a focus on a holistic, transdisciplinary approach to buildings and the complexity of issues involving the built environment with other systems over the course of their life: planning, briefing, design, construction, occupation and use, property exchange and evaluation, maintenance, alteration and end of life. Published articles provide conceptual and evidence-based approaches which reflect the complexity and linkages between cultural, environmental, economic, social, organisational, quality of life, health, well-being, design and engineering of the built environment.

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Routledge

## Website

The journal's website – also providing subscription information and instructions for authors - can be found at: [www.rbri.co.uk](http://www.rbri.co.uk)