



Building Regulation B

Introduction

The first set of national building standards was introduced in 1965. Now known as the Building Regulations, they set out:

- What qualifies as 'building work' and so falls under the control of the regulations
- What types of buildings are exempt (such as temporary buildings).
- The notification procedures that must be followed when starting, carrying out, and completing building work.
- Requirements for specific aspects of building design and construction.

New clarified Approved Document B

On 5 July 2019, in the wake of the Grenfell Tower fire, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) published a New clarified Approved Document B. The changes this introduces are intended to ensure that the document uses plain English, and it has also been significantly restructured with the design of blocks of flats moved from Volume 2 to Volume 1:

- Volume 1: Dwellings
- Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings.

An MHCLG spokesperson said: "This refreshed text provides clear guidance for building owners to ensure they meet our regulations so there is no misunderstanding of their responsibility for residents' safety... We will shortly set out our next steps for the guidance following our call for evidence last year."

On 27th November 2019, after a challenge to the consultation process that introduced the ban, the High Court ruled that the consultation had been inadequate in respect of the inclusion of products intended to reduce heat gain within a building (for example, blinds, shutters and awnings) within the ban. As a result the Court quashed one part of the 2018 regulations which had included within the ban "a device for reducing heat gain within a building by deflecting sunlight which is attached to an external wall". The practical effect of the Court judgment is that the regulations now exist as if that section of the regulations

What is Building Regulation B?

Part B: Fire Safety

Covers all precautionary measures necessary to provide safety from fires for building occupants, persons in the vicinity of buildings, and firefighters. Requirements and guidance covers means of escape in cases of fire, fire detection and warning systems, the fire resistance of structural elements, fire separation, protection, compartmentation and isolation to prevent fire spread, control of flammable materials, and access and facilities for firefighting.