HM Government

The Building Regulations 2010

Amendments to the Approved Documents

This document contains amendments to the following Approved Document:

Approved Document B: Fire safety
Volume 1 – Dwellings
Volume 2 – Buildings other than dwellings
2019 edition incorporating the 2020, 2022 and 2025 amendments

First published	March 2024
Updated	September 2024
Taking effect on	30 September 2026

For use in England

ONLINE VERSION

Introduction

This document sets out amendments to guidance previously published in Approved Document B: Fire safety, Volume 1 – Dwellings and Volume 2 – Buildings other than dwellings, 2019 edition incorporating the 2020, 2022 and 2025 amendments.

These amendments will be incorporated into both the online and paper versions of Approved Document B Volume 1 and Volume 2 when the changes take effect. Versions from before that date will need to be read alongside the amendments listed in this document. You should always check the online version to know that you are looking at the most up to date version.

The changes highlighted in this amendment booklet take effect on 30 September 2026 for use in England. The 2019 edition incorporating the 2020, 2022 and 2025 amendments will continue to apply where a building notice or an initial notice has been given to, or a building control approval application with full plans made to, the relevant authority before 30 September 2026 and either the building work to which it relates:

a. has started and is sufficiently progressed before that day; or

b. is started and is sufficiently progressed within the period of 18 months beginning on that day.

Please note that 'building notice', 'initial notice' and 'building control approval application with full plans' have the meanings given in the Building Regulations 2010. For the purpose of these transitional arrangements, building work is to be regarded as 'sufficiently progressed':

a. where the building work consists of the construction of a building, when the pouring of concrete for the permanent placement of the trench, pad or raft foundations has started, or the permanent placement of piling has started; or

b. where the building work consists of work to an existing building, when that work has started; or

c. where the building work consists of a material change of use of a building, when work to effect that change of use has stated.

The changes focus on the following fire safety provisions:

a. A new recommendation for more than one common stair to be provided in blocks of flats with a storey 18m or more in height.

b. Building design provisions to support the use of evacuation lifts in blocks of flats.

Full details of the changes are provided below.

The Building Regulations 2010
Approved Document B: Fire safety
Volume 1 – Dwellings
2019 edition incorporating the 2020, 2022 and 2025 amendments

List of amendments
Taking effect on 30 September 2026

Section 3: Means of escape – flats

Means of escape in the common parts of flats

Page 26 **Replace** subheading '**Number of escape routes**' with the following.

Design for horizontal escape

Replace paragraph 3.27 with the following.

3.27 From the flat entrance door, a single escape route is acceptable in either of the following cases.

a. The flat is on a storey served by a single common stair and both of the following apply.

i. Every flat is separated from the common stair by a protected lobby or common protected corridor (see Diagram 3.7).

ii. The maximum travel distance in Table 3.1, for escape in one direction only, is not exceeded.

b. The flat is on a storey served by two (or more) common stairs, the flat is in a dead end of a common corridor and the maximum travel distance given in Table 3.1, for escape in one direction only, is not exceeded (Diagram 3.8).

Replace Table 3.1 with the following.

Table 3.1 Limitations on travel distance in common areas of blocks of flats

Maximum travel distance from flat entrance door to storey exit or stair lobby[1]	
Escape in one direction	Escape in more than one direction
7.5m[2][3]	30m[3][4]

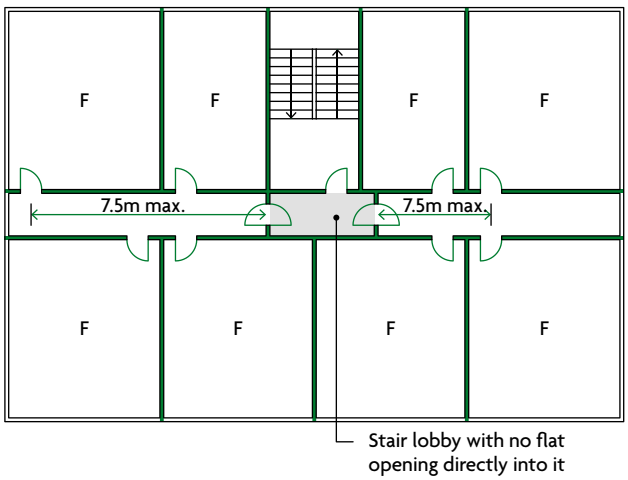
NOTES:

1. If travel distance is measured to a stair lobby, the lobby must not provide direct access to any storage room, flat or other space containing a fire hazard.
2. In the case of a small single stair building in accordance with Diagram 3.9, this is reduced to 4.5m.
3. Does not apply if all flats on a storey have independent alternative means of escape.
4. Sheltered housing may require reduced maximum travel distances.

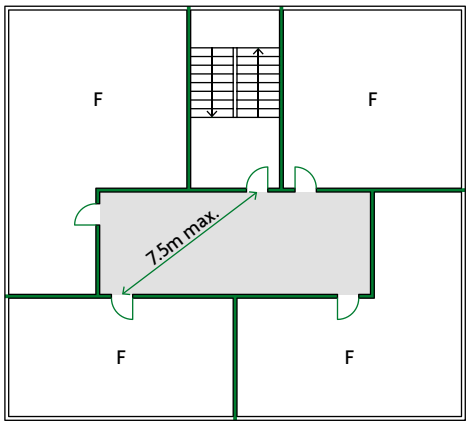
Page 27 **Replace** Diagram 3.7 with the following.

See para 3.27 and 3.40

a. Corridor access flats



b. Lobby access flats



F Flat

Shaded areas indicate zones where ventilation should be provided in accordance with paragraphs 3.57 to 3.60 (An external wall vent or smoke shaft located anywhere in the shaded area)

Fire resisting construction

NOTES:

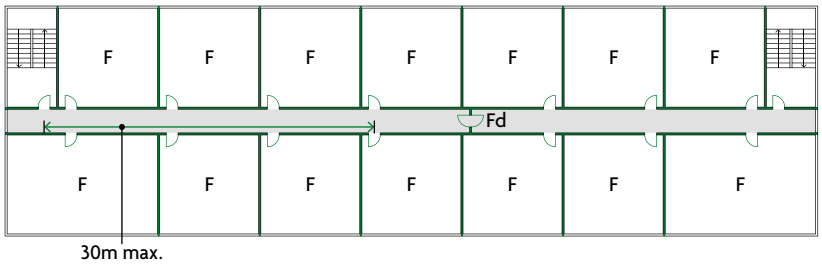
1. The arrangements shown also apply to the top storey.
2. See Diagram 3.9 for small single stair buildings.
3. All doors shown are fire doorsets.
4. Where travel distance is measured to a stair lobby, the lobby must not provide direct access to any storage room, flat or other space containing a potential fire hazard.
5. For further guidance on the performance of the fire doorsets from the corridor to the flat and/or evacuation shaft refer to Appendix C, Table C1.
6. A single common stair arrangement is only suitable for use in buildings with a top storey less than 18m in height (see Diagram D6 in Appendix D).

Diagram 3.7 Horizontal escape for flats served by a single common stair

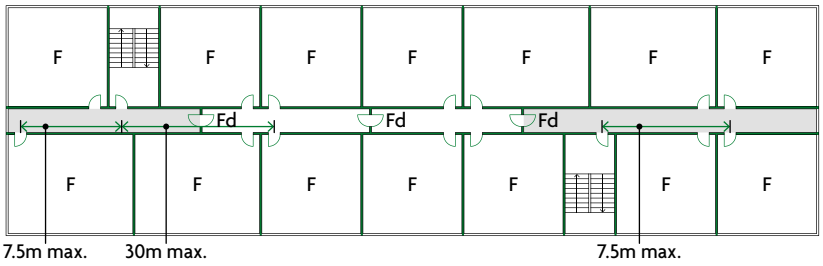
Page 28 **Replace** Diagram 3.8 with the following.

See para 3.27 and 3.40

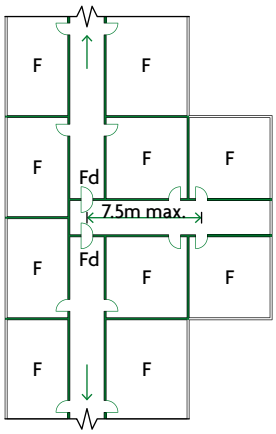
a. Corridor access without dead ends



b. Corridor access with dead ends
The central door may be omitted if maximum travel distance is not more than 15m



c. 'T' junction with main corridor



Fd Cross-corridor fire doorset
F Flat
Shaded areas indicate zones where ventilation should be provided in accordance with paragraphs 3.57 to 3.60 (An external wall vent or smoke shaft located anywhere in the shaded area)
Fire resisting construction
→ Escape route

NOTES:
1. The arrangements shown also apply to the top storey.
2. For further guidance on the fire resistance rating of the fire doorsets from the corridor to the flat and/or stairway refer to Appendix C, Table C1.

Diagram 3.8 Horizontal escape for flats served by more than one common stair

Insert new headings and paragraphs after Diagram 3.8 as follows.

Design for vertical escape

3.28 The limits on horizontal travel escape distances mean most people should be able to independently travel from the flats to a storey exit and from there make their way to a final exit.

See Section 15 for the provision of firefighting stairs in buildings.

3.29 Where evacuation lifts are provided, these should be located within an evacuation shaft containing a protected stairway, evacuation lift and evacuation lift lobby. An evacuation lift lobby should provide a refuge area for those waiting for the evacuation lift, have direct access to a protected stairway and not be directly accessible from any flat, maisonette, storage room or electrical equipment room.

Number of common stairs

3.30 Flats should be served by more than one common stair if either of the following applies.

a. The flat is on a storey that does not meet the criteria for a single escape route or a small single stair building (see paragraphs 3.27 and 3.32).

b. The building has a top storey of 18m or more in height (see Diagram D6 in Appendix D).

3.31 Interlocked stairs should be considered as a single escape route and do not constitute an alternative means of escape.

Page 30 **Replace** paragraph 3.33 with the following.

3.37 An escape route should not pass through one stair enclosure to reach an alternative exit. It may pass through a protected lobby (minimum REI 30) of one stair to reach an alternative exit. A protected lobby should not provide direct access to more than one stair.

Replace paragraph 3.35 with the following.

3.39 Divide a common corridor connecting two or more storey exits with a fire doorset fitted with a self-closing device (minimum E 30 S_a). See Diagram 3.8. Associated screens should be fire resisting. Doors should be positioned such that smoke does not affect access to more than one stair.

Page 31 **Replace** paragraph 3.49 with the following.

3.53 Despite the provisions described, it is probable that some smoke will get into the common corridor or lobby from a fire in a flat.

There should therefore be some means of ventilating the common corridors/lobbies to control smoke and so protect the common stairs. This means of ventilation offers additional protection to that provided by the fire doors to the stair, as well as some protection to the corridors/lobbies.

Where evacuation lifts are provided, evacuation shafts should be afforded the same level of minimum protection as the stairway. Any smoke control system designed to protect the staircase should extend the same level of protection to the evacuation lift and evacuation lift lobby.

Ventilation can be natural (paragraphs 3.50 to 3.53) or mechanical (paragraph 3.54).

Page 32 **Replace** paragraph 3.50 with the following.

3.54 Except in buildings that comply with Diagram 3.9, the corridor or lobby directly in front of each storey exit should have a smoke vent. The location of the vent should comply with both of the following.

a. Be as high as practicable.

b. Be positioned so the top edge is at least as high as the top of the door to the stair.

NOTE: Evacuation lift lobbies form part of the evacuation shaft and are located after the storey exit.

Page 33 **Replace** sub-paragraph 3.56 (b) with the following.

b. Not be situated within a protected stairway, evacuation shaft or protected lobby.

Replace heading '**Common stairs**' with the following.

Design and construction of common stairs

Delete subheading '**Number of common stairs**' and paragraph 3.59.

Replace paragraph 3.60 with the following.

3.63 A stair of acceptable width for everyday use will be sufficient for escape purposes. If it is also a firefighting stair or a common stair in a building with a storey 18m or more in height (see Diagram D6 in Appendix D), it should be at least 1100mm wide. The width is the clear width between the walls or balustrades. Any handrails and strings intruding into that width by a maximum of 100mm on each side may be ignored.

Page 40 **Replace** sub-paragraph 3.99 (a) with the following.

a. Be sited within the enclosures of a protected stairway or evacuation shaft.

Replace paragraph 3.101 with the following.

3.104 In buildings designed for phased evacuation or progressive horizontal evacuation, if the lift well is not within the enclosures of a protected stairway or evacuation shaft, its entrance should be separated at every storey by a protected lobby (minimum REI 30).

Replace paragraph 3.102 with the following.

3.105 In basements and enclosed car parks, the lift should be within the enclosure of a protected stairway or evacuation shaft. Otherwise, the lift should be approached only via a protected lobby or protected corridor (minimum REI 30).

Appendix A: Key terms

Page 116 **Insert** the following two entries between the definitions of **Evacuation lift** and **Exit passageway**.

Evacuation lift lobby An area protected from fire and smoke ingress by fire resisting construction and smoke control measures, providing direct access to an evacuation lift, where a person can wait for a lift service in relative safety while an evacuation is underway.

Evacuation shaft A protected shaft containing a protected stairway, an evacuation lift (together with its machine room) and evacuation lift lobbies.

Page 117 **Insert** the following entry between the definitions of **Inner room** and **Live/work unit**.

Interlocked stair Two interlocking protected stairways providing two separate paths of egress within one protected shaft or separated protected shafts. These are also sometimes referred to as scissor stairs or stacked stairs.

Page 119 **Replace** the entry for **Storey exit** with the following.

Storey exit A final exit, or a doorway that gives direct access into a protected stairway, evacuation lift lobby within an evacuation shaft, firefighting lobby or external escape route.

NOTE: If an institutional building is planned to enable progressive horizontal evacuation, a door in a compartment wall is considered a storey exit for the purposes of requirement B1.

Appendix C: Fire doorsets

Pages 138 and 139 **Replace** Table C1 with the following table.

Table C1 Provisions for fire doorsets

Position of door	Minimum fire resistance of door in terms of integrity (minutes) when tested to the relevant European standard[1]	Minimum fire resistance of door in terms of integrity (minutes) when tested to **BS 476-22**
1. **In a compartment wall separating buildings**	Same as for the wall in which the door is fitted, but a minimum of 60 minutes	Same as for the wall in which the door is fitted, but a minimum of 60 minutes
2. **In a compartment wall:**		
a. if it separates a flat from a space in common use	E 30 S_a [2]	FD 30 S[2]
b. enclosing a protected shaft forming a stairway or an evacuation shaft wholly or partly above the adjoining ground in a building used for flats, other residential, assembly and recreation, or office purposes	E 30 S_a [2]	FD 30 S[2]
c. enclosing a protected shaft forming a stairway or an evacuation shaft not described in (b) above	Half the period of fire resistance of the wall in which it is fitted, but 30 minutes minimum and with suffix S_a [2]	Half the period of fire resistance of the wall in which it is fitted, but 30 minutes minimum and with suffix S[2]
d. enclosing a protected shaft forming a lift or service shaft	Half the period of fire resistance of the wall in which it is fitted, but 30 minutes minimum	Half the period of fire resistance of the wall in which it is fitted, but 30 minutes minimum
e. not described in (a), (b), (c) or (d) above.	Same as for the wall in which it is fitted, but add S_a [2] if the door is used for progressive horizontal evacuation under the guidance to requirement B1	Same as for the wall in which it is fitted, but add S[2] if the door is used for progressive horizontal evacuation under the guidance to requirement B1
3. **In a compartment floor**	Same as for the floor in which it is fitted	Same as for the floor in which it is fitted
4. **Forming part of the enclosures of:**		
a. protected stairway or evacuation shaft (except as described in item 9 or 11(b) below)	E 30 S_a [2]	FD 30 S[2]
b. a lift shaft (see paragraph 3.99b) that does not form a protected shaft in 2(b), (c) or (d) above.	E 30	FD 30
5. **Forming part of the enclosure of:**		
a. a protected lobby approach (or protected corridor) to a stairway or an evacuation shaft	E 30 S_a [2]	FD 30 S[2]
b. any other protected corridor	E 20 S_a [2]	FD 20 S[2]
c. a protected lobby approach to a lift shaft (paragraphs 3.102 to 3.104).	E 30 S_a [2]	FD 30 S[2]

Table C1 Continued

Position of door	Minimum fire resistance of door in terms of integrity (minutes) when tested to the relevant European standard[1]	Minimum fire resistance of door in terms of integrity (minutes) when tested to **BS 476-22**
6. **Giving access to an external escape route**	E 30	FD 30
7. **Sub-dividing:**		
a. corridors connecting alternative exits	E 20 S_a[2]	FD 20 S[2]
b. dead-end portions of corridors from the remainder of the corridor.	E 20 S_a[2]	FD 20 S[2]
8. **Any door within a cavity barrier**	E 30	FD 30
9. **Any door that forms part of the enclosure to a protected entrance hall or protected landing in a flat**	E 20	FD 20
10. **Any door that forms part of the enclosure:**		
a. to a place of special fire hazard	E 30	FD 30
b. to ancillary accommodation in care homes (see paragraph 2.44 in Approved Document B Volume 2).	E 30	FD 30
11. **In a dwellinghouse:**		
a. between a dwellinghouse and a garage	E 30 S_a[2]	FD 30 S[2]
b. forming part of the enclosures to a protected stairway in a single family dwellinghouse	E 20	FD 20
c. within any fire resisting construction in a dwellinghouse not described elsewhere in this table.	E 20	FD 20

NOTES:

1. Classified in accordance with **BS EN 13501-2**. National classifications do not necessarily equate with European classifications, therefore products cannot typically assume a European class unless they have been tested accordingly.
2. Unless pressurisation techniques that comply with **BS EN 12101-6** are used, these doors should also comply with one of the following conditions.
   a. Have a leakage rate not exceeding 3m^3/m/hour (from head and jambs only) when tested at 25Pa under **BS 476-31.1**.
   b. Meet the additional S_a classification when tested to **BS EN 1634-3**.

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Appendix A: Key terms

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NOTE: If an institutional building is planned to enable progressive horizontal evacuation, a door in a compartment wall is considered a storey exit for the purposes of requirement B1.

List of Approved Documents

The following documents have been published to give guidance on how to meet the Building Regulations. You can find the date of the edition approved by the Secretary of State at www.gov.uk.

Approved Document A
Structure

Approved Document B
Fire safety
Volume 1: Dwellings

Approved Document B
Fire safety
Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings

Approved Document C
Site preparation and resistance to contaminants and moisture

Approved Document D
Toxic substances

Approved Document E
Resistance to the passage of sound

Approved Document F
Ventilation
Volume 1: Dwellings

Approved Document F
Ventilation
Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings

Approved Document G
Sanitation, hot water safety and water efficiency

Approved Document H
Drainage and waste disposal

Approved Document J
Combustion appliances and fuel storage systems

Approved Document K
Protection from falling, collision and impact

Approved Document L
Conservation of fuel and power
Volume 1: Dwellings

Approved Document L
Conservation of fuel and power
Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings

Approved Document M
Access to and use of buildings
Volume 1: Dwellings

Approved Document M
Access to and use of buildings
Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings

Approved Document O
Overheating

Approved Document P
Electrical safety – Dwellings

Approved Document Q
Security – Dwellings

Approved Document R
Infrastructure for electronic communications
Volume 1: Physical infrastructure and network connection for new dwellings

Approved Document R
Infrastructure for electronic communications
Volume 2: Physical infrastructure for high-speed electronic communications networks

Approved Document S
Infrastructure for the charging of electric vehicles

Approved Document T
Toilets

Approved Document 7
Materials and workmanship

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