

MINISTRY OF HOUSING, COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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*Housing Communities and Local Government Circular*

*Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2 September 2024*

# THE BUILDING ACT 1984

## THE BUILDING REGULATIONS 2010

### APPROVED DOCUMENT B, VOLUME 1 & VOLUME 2

- **AMENDS APPROVED DOCUMENT B, VOLUME 1**
- **AMENDS APPROVED DOCUMENT B, VOLUME 2**

Circular number

04/2024

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. I am directed by the Secretary of State to draw your attention to the publication of amendments to Approved Document B (Fire Safety), volume 1: Dwellings and volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings.
2. The amended Approved Document B will come into force on 30 September 2026 in the circumstances set out in the formal notice of approval in Annex A to this Circular.
3. The purpose of this Circular is to:
  - a. Draw attention to the amendments made to Approved Document B (Fire Safety);
  - b. Announce the approval of the amended Approved Document.

## **APPLICATION OF THE CHANGES TO THE APPROVED DOCUMENT**

4. The changes made to the Approved Document only apply to buildings and building work in England.

## **TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS**

5. The changes to Approved Document B take effect on 30 September 2026.
6. However, 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. has started and is sufficiently progressed within the period of 18 months beginning on that day.

Note that 'building notice', 'initial notice' and 'building control approval application with full plans' have the meanings given in the Building Regulations 2010.

7. For the purpose of the amendments highlighted above, 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 started.

## APPROVED DOCUMENT B

8. Approved Document B (Fire Safety) (2019 edition incorporating the 2020, 2022 and 2025 amendments) has been revised to include updated guidance on for the provision of a second staircase in blocks of flats with a storey 18m or more in height.
9. Section 3 of the guidance is also restructured, separating out provisions for horizontal escape and vertical escape adopting a similar structure to Volume 2.
10. Furthermore, the concept of evacuation shafts is introduced to the guidance to support the provision of evacuation lifts where these are provided.
11. Finally, the proposed amendment introduces new terminology including definitions for evacuation shaft, evacuation lift lobby, interlocked stair and storey exit.
- 12.
13. The 2025 Approved Document B amendment booklet also includes references to updates to Regulation 38 reflecting the latest changes to the regulations following the implementation of the Building Safety Act and ensures that guidance remains current.
14. Annexes A and B to this Circular give the Notice of Approval for the amended Approved Document and the Notice of Withdrawal of previous editions of the amended Approved Documents, subject to the transitional provisions.
15. Copies of the amended Approved Documents are available from:  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/approved-documents>, or  
RIBA  
<https://www.ribabookshops.com/>

## ENQUIRES

16. All enquiries on matters covered by this Circular should be addressed to:  
**Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government**

**Fry Building  
2 Marsham Street  
London SW1P 4DF**

**Tel: 0303 444 0000** E-mail: [buildingassurance@communities.gov.uk](mailto:buildingassurance@communities.gov.uk)


Signed:



John Palmer

## ANNEX A – Notice of Approval

### Building Act 1984

<b>NOTICE OF APPROVAL OF REVISION OF DOCUMENTS GIVING PRACTICAL GUIDANCE WITH RESPECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS 2010</b>	
The Secretary of State hereby gives notice under section 6 of the Building Act 1984 that, in the exercise of said powers under section 6, the Secretary of State has approved revisions to the documents listed below for the purposes of giving practical guidance with respect to the specified requirements of the Building Regulations 2010.	
The revisions take effect on 30 September 2026 except in respect of work for which a building notice or initial notice has been given or a building control application with full plans has been made before that date and provided work is sufficiently progressed before 30 March 2028.	
<b>Document</b>	<b>Requirements of the Building Regulations 2010 in respect of which the document is approved</b>
Approved Document B (Fire safety) volume 1: Dwellings (2019 edition incorporating 2020, 2022, 2025 and 2026 amendments).	Part B, Schedule 1
Approved Document B (Fire safety) volume 2: Buildings other than dwelling houses (2019 edition incorporating 2020, 2022, 2025 and 2026 amendments).	Part B, Schedule 1
Signed by authority of the Secretary of State	 J. Palmer An Assistant Secretary for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2 September 2024

## ANNEX B – Notice of Withdrawal

# Building Act 1984

<b>NOTICE OF WITHDRAWAL OF APPROVAL OF DOCUMENTS GIVING PRACTICAL GUIDANCE WITH RESPECT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE BUILDING REGULATIONS 2010</b>	
<p>The Secretary of State hereby gives notice under section 6 of the Building Act 1984 that, in the exercise of the powers under section 6(5), the Secretary of State has withdrawn approval of the documents listed below for the purposes of giving practical guidance with respect to the specified requirements of the Building Regulations 2010.</p> <p>The withdrawal of approval takes effect on 30 September 2026 except in respect of work for which a building notice or initial notice has been given or a building control application with full plans has been made before that date and provided work is sufficiently progressed before 30 March 2028.</p>	
<b>Document</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approved Document B (Fire safety) volume 1: Dwellings (2019 edition incorporating 2020, 2022 and 2025 amendments).</li><li>• Approved Document B (Fire safety) volume 2: Buildings other than dwelling houses (2019 edition incorporating 2020, 2022 and 2025 amendments).</li></ul>	
Signed by authority of the Secretary of State	 J. Palmer An Assistant Secretary for the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2 September 2024