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Housing Update

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The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities >

(Eddie Hughes)

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I wish to update the House on the publication of the Government response to the 2021 Future Buildings Standard consultation and the laying of a statutory instrument today to implement the outcomes of this consultation, and our previous consultation on the Future Homes Standard.

Today's publication of the consultation response, and the implementation of an ambitious uplift to the building regulations, will ensure new homes and buildings in England are highly efficient, with significantly lower carbon emissions. This marks an important step on our journey towards a cleaner, greener built environment and it supports us in our target to reduce the UK's carbon emissions to net zero by 2050.

The Future Buildings Standard consultation

We have recently conducted a two-stage consultation on proposed changes to the building regulations and the associated statutory guidance. Today I am publishing the Government's response to the second stage of the consultation, the Future Buildings Standard consultation.

The Government response to the first stage of the consultation, the Future Homes Standard consultation, was published in January this year. It set out our plans for the Future Homes Standard, an ambitious new standard for new homes to be introduced from 2025. It also set out plans for an uplift in standards for new homes in 2021 as a stepping stone towards the 2025 standard.

The Future Buildings Standard consultation built on that by setting out plans for the Future Buildings Standard, to be introduced for new non-domestic buildings in England from 2025. The consultation also set out plans for an uplift in standards in 2021 in advance of implementing the 2025 standard.

The Government response to the Future Buildings Standard consultation confirms that, with implementation starting from 2025, the Future Buildings Standard will produce highly efficient non-domestic buildings which use low-carbon heat and have the best fabric standards possible. The 2021 uplift to the building regulations will support the delivery of the Future Buildings Standard through a 27% reduction in the carbon emissions of new non-domestic buildings in England.

The consultation response sets out the measures we are taking to simplify and clarify the guidance on ventilation and safeguard the health of building residents and users. Covid-19 has also shown the importance of ventilation in reducing the spread of infection. The consultation response confirms that we are introducing new guidance to mitigate the risks of airborne infection.

The consultation response also confirms our intention to introduce a new requirement on overheating mitigation in the building regulations. This will mean new residential buildings must be designed to reduce overheating. This is an important part of our work to adapt our country to face climate change, and it will protect people where they live and sleep. Several local authorities have already set overheating mitigation policies for their areas, and we have learnt from them in developing this national standard. The new overheating standard is a part of the building regulations and is therefore mandatory, so there will be no need for policies in development plans to duplicate this.

I am placing a copy of the Government response to the 2021 Future Buildings Standard consultation in the House Library.

Implementation of the 2021 uplift to the building regulations

Together, the policies set out in the Government response to the Future Buildings Standard consultation and the policies set out in the Government response to the Future Homes Standard consultation, form the policy for the 2021 uplift to the building regulations. The 2021 uplift is intended to provide a meaningful and achievable increase to the **energy efficiency** standards in the short term and support industry to prepare and position itself to build to the full standards from 2025, as well as delivering the outcomes on ventilation and overheating covered above.

Alongside publication of the Government response to the Future Buildings Standard consultation, I have laid a statutory instrument to implement the amendments to the building regulations and I have published new statutory guidance.

Implementing this uplift is a significant moment for the sector and on our journey to net zero. It provides a pathway towards creating homes and buildings that are fit for the future, and a built environment with lower carbon emissions and homes adapted to the overheating risks caused by a warming climate.

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