**Number: WG48014**

Welsh Government

Consultation response form

Amendments to Part B (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations and associated statutory guidance documents, including a call for evidence

Date of issue: 17 October 2023

Action required: Responses by 09 January 2024

This consultation seeks views on proposals to:

* Amend the ban of the use of combustible materials in and on external walls of buildings, including building types covered, attachments such as blinds, shutters and awnings, list of exemptions, and a proposal to specifically ban the use of metal composite panels in and on the external walls of all buildings
* Setting limits on the use of combustible materials on certain buildings over 11m through Approved Document B
* Introduce Evacuation Alert System (EAS) in accordance with BS 8629 in all new blocks of flats (Purpose group 1(a)) with a floor 18m or more above ground level
* Introduce Secure Information Boxes in all new blocks of flats with a floor of 11m or more above ground level
* Introduce floor identification and flat wayfinding signage within blocks of flats with a floor of 11m or more above ground level
* An amendment regarding referencing of BS EN 13501 and BS 476 fire classifications used in Approved Document B (AD B) and amend regulations 6 and 7 of the Building Regulations 2010 to permit the use of materials achieving the class A2fl-s1 or A1fl
* Call for evidence over the number of stairs in buildings and the removal of all references to the BS 476 fire classifications from AD B

You can email your response to the questions in this consultation to: [enquiries.brconstruction@gov.wales](mailto:enquiries.brconstruction@gov.wales)

If you are responding in writing, please make it clear which consultation and which questions you are responding to:

**Amendments to Part B (Fire Safety) of the Building Regulations and associated statutory guidance documents, including a call for evidence.**

Written responses should be sent to:

Building Regulations, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NQ

If you have any queries on this consultation, please email: [enquiries.brconstruction@gov.wales](mailto:enquiries.brconstruction@gov.wales) or telephone: 0300 062 8144.

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| **Data Protection** |
| Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.  The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tick the box below. We will then blank them out.  Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone’s name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information. |

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| **Confidentiality** |
| Responses to consultations may be made public on the internet or in a report.  **If you do not want your name and address to be shown on any documents we produce please indicate here** |

**CONSULTATION FORM**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Amendments to statutory guidance** | |
| **Date:** | |
| Your Name: |  |
| Your Position *(if applicable):* |  |
| Your Organisation *(if applicable):* |  |
| Email / Telephone Number: |  |
| Your address: |  |

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| --- | --- |
| Type of Organisation: **Choose one of the following**: | Select one |

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| --- | --- |
| * Builder/Developer |  |
| * Manufacturer |  |
| * Designer/Engineer/Surveyor |  |
| * Local Authority Building Control |  |
| * Approved Inspector Building Control |  |
| * Access Consultant |  |
| * Occupational Therapist |  |
| * Disabled People’s Organisation |  |
| * Facilities Manager |  |
| * Retailer |  |
| * Construction Professional |  |
| * Property Manager/Landlord |  |
| * Landlord Representative Organisation |  |
| * Changing Places User/Carer |  |
| * Parent/Carer |  |
| * Charity |  |
| * Campaigner or Lobby Group |  |
| * Other Interested Party (please specify) |  |

**Part 1**

## **Combustible cladding ban proposals**

## **Changing the building types**

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| **Q1** | Do you agree that hotels, hostels and boarding houses, as referenced within the definition of room for residential purposes in regulation 2, should now be included within regulation 7(4) of the Building Regulations 2010, and therefore subject to the ban? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If no, please provide your reasoning and evidence. | | | | |

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| **Q2** | Should any other building types be included within the scope of the ban? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide details and evidence to support your answer. | | | | |

**Setting limits on combustible materials on certain buildings 11m and above**

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| **Q3** | Do you agree that the amendment to Approved Document B to set limits on certain combustible products should be set for buildings with a storey 11-18m (see Diagram C6, Appendix C in Approved Document B Vol. 2)? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| **Q3a** | Is there an alternative lower height threshold that should be considered? | | | |
| Please provide evidence. | | | | |

## **Metal Composite Materials**

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| **Q4** | Do you agree that metal composite panels with a polyethylene core should be banned from being used in external wall construction of any building regardless of height or purpose? If no, why not? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If no, please provide evidence to support your answer. | | | | |

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| **Q5** | If their use was to be restricted, do you agree with the proposed definition? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide evidence to support your answer. | | | | |

## **Attachments**

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| **Q6** | Do you agree that solar shading products need to achieve class A2-s1, d0 or A1? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If no, please provide your reasoning and evidence. |

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| **Q7** | Do you agree with the proposed definition of solar shading products? If no, what other definition would you propose and why? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your reasoning and evidence. |

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| **Q8** | Do you agree with our proposal to exempt awnings at ground level? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If no, please provide your reasoning and evidence. |

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| **Q9** | Are there other additional components used as attachments to external walls which should be included within the ban as defined by regulation 2(6)(b)? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If yes, what additional components should be included and why? |

## **Exemptions**

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| **Q10** | Do you agree with the exemption of fibre optic cables from the ban? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If no, please provide your reasoning. | | | | |

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| **Q11** | Which components, if any, do you consider should no longer be included in the list of exemptions in regulation 7(3) and why? |
| Please provide your answer. | |

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| **Q12** | Which additional components, if any, should be included in the list of exemptions in regulation 7(3) and why? |
| Please provide your answer. | |

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## **Laminated glass**

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| **Q13** | Do you agree that laminated glass in balcony construction should continue to have to achieve A2-s1, d0 classification or A1? Please provide evidence to support your answer where possible and discuss specific materials or products. | Yes | No | Unsure |
|  |  |  |
| Please provide your answer. | | | | |

## **Roof Components**

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| **Q14** | Do you agree that additional clarification in regulations or Approved Document B, that roofing membranes are not required to achieve A2-s1, d0 classification or higher when used as part of a roof connecting to an external wall is required? If no, please provide an explanation with evidence to support your answer where possible and discuss specific materials or products. | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. | | | | |

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## **Materials below ground level**

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| **Q15** | Do you agree with the proposal of expanding the exemption of the use of  water proofing and insulation material from below ground level to up to  300mm above ground level? If yes, what other conditions should be imposed on their use if any? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. |

## **Floor Testing**

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| **Q16** | Do you agree with the proposed expansion of classifications required for materials used horizontally to include Class A2fl-s1 and Class A1fl? If no, please explain why and provide evidence where possible. | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. |

**Part 2**

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## **Evacuation alert systems**

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| **Q17** | Do you agree with the proposal to require the provision of evacuation alert systems in new blocks of flats 18m or more above ground level? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If no, please provide your reasoning and evidence. |

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| **Q18** | Do you agree with the height threshold of 18m or more above ground level? If no, please provide alternative height threshold and any evidence. | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. | | | | |

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| **Q19** | Are there any other types of buildings which should be included? Please provide any evidence. | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. |

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## **Secure information boxes**

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| **Q20** | Do you agree with the proposal to introduce a requirement for Secure Information Boxes in all new blocks of flats with a storey 11m or more above ground level? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If no, please provide your reasoning. |

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| **Q21** | Do you agree with the height threshold of 11m? If no, please provide alternative height threshold and any evidence. | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. |

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| **Q22** | Are there any other types of buildings which should be included? Please provide any evidence. |
| Please provide your answer | |

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## **Wayfinding signage**

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| **Q23** | Do you agree with the proposal to introduce wayfinding signage for the fire service in all new blocks of flats (Purpose Group 1(a)) with a storey 11m or more above ground level? | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| If no, please provide your reasoning. |

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| **Q24** | Do you agree with the height threshold of 11m? If no, please provide alternative height threshold and any evidence. | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. |

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| **Q25** | Are there any other types of buildings which should be included? Please provide any evidence. |
| Please provide your answer. | |

## **European fire classifications**

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| **Q26** | Do you agree that the national classifications for reaction to fire and fire resistance should be removed from the main body Approved Document B? If you disagree, what evidence can you provide which outlines why. | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. |

**Call for evidence**

## **European fire classifications**

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| **Q27** | Please outline any concerns (as suggested in paragraph 65) you have about the withdrawal of all the references to the BS 476 series of national classifications within Approved Document B (including appendices). |

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| Please provide your answer. |

## **Second staircases**

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| **Q28** | Do you consider that Approved Document B should include a maximum threshold for the provision of a single staircase in residential buildings?  Please consider when providing your answer:  (a) what height do you think the threshold should be set?  (b) What design considerations should be considered in requiring a second staircase? (e.g. appropriate separation between staircases). | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please include any evidence you have to support your answer. |

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| **Q29** | We have asked a number of specific questions throughout this paper, if you have any further comments to make regarding any of the proposals, please set them out here. |
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**Impact Assessments**

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| **Q30** | Do you agree with the cost estimates and the overall Impact Assessment? If no, please explain what you consider appropriate and provide evidence to show why. | Yes | No | Unsure |
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| Please provide your answer. |

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| **Q31** | We would like to know your views on the effects that the proposed amendments would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English.  What effects do you think there would be?  How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated? |
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| **Q32** | Please also explain how you believe the proposed actions could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects, or increased positive effects, on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language. |
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1. This consultation will close on 09 January 2024. Responses to this consultation will be analysed and a Welsh Government Response will follow.
2. Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report.  If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here.