



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Lord Callanan
Minister for Business, Energy and
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Dear Bim,

Thank you for your letter dated 21 July to the Rt Hon Greg Clark MP, regarding the effects of overheating in buildings. Your letter has been forwarded to this Department for reply and I am doing so as this matter falls under my Ministerial portfolio.

While we accelerate efforts to end our contribution to climate change, we recognise we must continue to take robust action to ensure the country is well prepared to face the challenges the changing climate is bringing, including the risks to human health, wellbeing, and productivity from overheating. The Government considers climate change adaptation to be a priority.

The UK Government fully recognises the scale of the challenge, as set out in the Climate Change Risk Assessment and the underlying reports supplied by the Climate Change Committee. We have made some progress as the CCC notes, but we must go much further and faster to properly prepare for the impacts of a warmer world. The UK Government is developing a Third National Adaptation Programme (NAP3) for England which will set out how we will meet that challenge.

In December 2021, the Government introduced a new overheating requirement into the Building Regulations, which came into force in June 2022. The requirement means that new residential buildings, including houses, flats, residential care homes, student accommodation, and children's homes must be designed in such a way as to reduce overheating. This is an important part of our work to adapt our country to face climate change, and it will protect the most vulnerable, the elderly and the very young where they live and sleep.

The Climate Change Committee's most recent Advice Report has set out that building designs and technology are available that can greatly reduce occupant exposure to heat while ensuring high levels of thermal efficiency. Beneficial adaptation actions include the updating of building regulations and other policy measures to address overheating through passive cooling measures like better shading, reflective surfaces and green cover.

The Government is working to ensure homes are fit for the future. The Future Buildings Standard consultation sets out proposals to reduce the risk of overheating in new residential buildings by introducing a new overheating mitigation requirement in the

Building Regulations. The Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) have introduced this new requirement to ensure that new residential buildings are built for a warming climate. The new requirement prioritises addressing overheating through passive measures including reducing solar gains and sufficient removal of heat.

The Government has undertaken research to examine the overheating risk and impacts in existing buildings to inform our approach to managing this risk. In September 2021 BEIS published Cooling in the UK report, a research project led by infrastructure consultancy AECOM consulting that assesses potential future cooling needs in buildings, and the Energy Follow Up Survey (EFUS) Reports, led by the Building Research Establishment (BRE). This report primarily focused on winter heating patterns, energy consumption and thermal comfort, but also included work by Loughborough University on summer overheating. Further analysis of this data has recently been commissioned to examine in more detail the overheating risk.

In October 2021 we published the Heat and Buildings Strategy which sets out our plan to decarbonise the UK's 30 million homes and workplaces. Within the Strategy we commit to considering current and possible future scenarios, including overheating risk and indoor air quality risk when developing future policies to future-proof buildings. BEIS plans to undertake further research in this area, while developing the detailed policy framework underpinning the strategy.

Thank you for writing to highlight your concerns. I trust this information will be helpful.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Martin Callan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Lord Callanan