Roseview windows

BUILDING REGULATIONS 2022

Guide to new regulations on trickle vents and energy efficiency

version 1.0 | March 2022

On **15th June 2022** a number of building regulations relevant to the glazing industry are changing. These include changes to Approved Documents F (ventilation), L (energy efficiency), M (access) and O (overheating).

As a result, all installations that take place after 15th June 2022 will have to comply with the new regulations.

Some of the most controversial changes, and the ones that have caused the most debate, have been those to Approved Document F, which covers trickle ventilation.

In this guide we'll explain the new Approved Document F regulations on trickle vents, what they mean, how you can comply with them and under what circumstances you will and will not require trickle vents. There's also a short section on Document L, which is much simpler!

Please note that the contents of this guide represent our interpretation of the new building regulations. However, we are not authorities in the nuances of building regs, and you should always consult the regulations yourself, and talk to your competent person scheme (e.g. FENSA or CERTASS), the GGF and most importantly the relevent Building Control Officer regarding your project.

At time of writing, you can access the full list of Approved Documents here...

https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/approved-documents

Contents

APPROVED DOCUMENT F

The new regulations are split into two documents: F1 (dwellings) and F2 (non-dwellings). They are then further split between regulations for new homes and existing homes. This guide will focus predominantly on the regulations covering dwellings - especially replacement windows for existing homes.

General requirements (including new build)

For both new build and existing homes, if trickle vents are to be used as the method of providing background ventilation, the regulations are as follows:

- Habitable rooms (including kitchens): minimum **8.000mm²** equivalent area
- Bathrooms (with or without a toilet): minimum **4,000mm²** equivalent area
- Single story buildings: **10,000mm²** per habitable room

If it is not technically feasible to reach the required minimum equivalent area, the ventilation you provide should be as close to the minimum requirement as possible.

Trickle vents are not the only accepted way of providing background ventilation. For instance, continuous mechanical ventilation of a certain rating can replace the need for trickle vents. Therefore window manufacturers like Roseview need to be told how much ventilation is required per window.

Ventilators should be at least 1,700mm from floor level and be controllable, either automatically or manually.

Night latches are not an acceptable way of providing the necessary ventilation.

These rules are generally in line with existing new build regulations, although the amount of ventilation required has been increased from 5,000mm² to 8.000mm².

Replacement windows

On existing homes the rules have changed more dramatically.

Previously the regulations were based on a “like-for-like” system. If the windows you were replacing had trickle vents, the new ones would need them too. However if there weren’t trickle vents before, you didn’t need to fit them to replacement windows.

This has changed.

Changing the windows means that you need to meet the ventilation requirements listed above, or at least ensure that ventilation is not less satisfactory than before the windows were replaced, It is also noted that replacing older windows with new versions will likely improve airtightness and reduce background ventilation, and therefore should be considered.

Essentially this means that all replacement windows will require trickle vents unless a suitable alternative method of ventilation is provided and approved. The new trickle vents should comply with the minimum equivalent areas listed above. At the very least, when replacing windows with trickle vents the new vents should not be smaller than they were before.

POSSIBLE EXEMPTIONS

Although the new regulations are very clear, there are a couple of possible exemptions built in that may remove the need for trickle vents. This may be particuarly relevant to sash windows going into older properties.

Heritage & traditional buildings

Section 0.5 of Approved Document F states the following:

> **0.5** Work to the following types of dwellings may not need to comply fully with the ventilation standards in this approved document.
>
> a. Those listed in accordance with section 1 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
>
> b. Those in a conservation area designated in accordance with section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.
>
> c. Other historic buildings with a vapour-permeable construction that both absorbs moisture and readily allows moisture to evaporate. These include those built with wattle and daub, cob or stone constructions using lime render or mortar.

It goes on to state that you should consult the local authority conservation officer if you are using clauses 0.5a or 0.5b as an exemption. It doesn't go into any more detail on using clause 0.5c.

We have requested further clarification on clause 0.5c from a variety of sources, as we believe a large number of older properties may fall into this category. In particular we're interested to know exactly what "vapour-permeable construction that both absorbs moisture and readily allows moisture to evaporate" means. Unfortunately we're yet to receive anything useful. It seems that - for the time being - interpretation of this clause will be down to building control officers.

Minor works rule

Table 3.1 of Approved Document F lists a range of energy efficiency works, which it categorises as either "minor works" or "major works". In that table is shows the following:

Replacing less than or equal to 30% of the total existing windows or door units	**MINOR**
Replacing more than 30% of the total existing windows or door units	**MAJOR**

It then goes on to state in Diagram 3.1 that a maximum of one or two minor works count as Category A, which is describes as follows:

If the method in Diagram 3.1 results in the work being categorised as Category A, it is likely that the energy efficiency measures have not reduced the ventilation provision of the dwelling below the requirements of F1(1) so no further ventilation provision is necessary.

Again, this needs further clarification that we haven't been able to get yet. But it may provide a way of reducing the requirement for trickle vents.

Technical feasibility

If it is not technically feasible to meet the requirements, you are expected to get as close as you can to the minimum equivalent area within the limitations you have. For instance, one small window that isn't large enough to take an 8,000mm² trickle vent should have the largest vent you can put on it (unless you're providing the 8,000mm² on other windows).

This raises a question - on a slim sash window like Ultimate Rose, fitted in check behind the brickwork and with a sash profile that's too slim to handle any current trickle vent, does that mean that it's not feasible to fit trickle vents at all? If so, does this make the project exempt?

We don't know the answer to this, but we suspect that - at the moment - nobody does. Every time we try to get clarification on something, all we get is "that would be up to the building control officer". They may insist on reveal fit instead of check fit, so that trickle vents can be placed in the outer frame or add-ons. But if you're trying to preserve the original appearance of the building, that's not viable.

So, in short, if you have a project like this and you talk to the building control officer, maybe ask the question (and let us know how you get on!).

No matter what, check with building control!

Since the new regulations were proposed last year, we've tried several times to raise questions and get clarification on exemptions - especially regarding heritage and traditional buildings. Unfortunately it seems virtually everyone is in the dark, and the only answer they can give is that decisions will be made by building control officers.

Therefore at this stage our advice is that if you have a project which you or your customer feels should be exempt from the new trickle vent regulations, speak to building control. Hopefully they will be sympathetic and understand that heritage and trickle vents don't go together, so one may need to take priority over the other.

PRACTICAL ADVICE

What does all this mean?

In simple terms, the new regulations mean that - unless a suitable exemption is found - it no longer matters whether you are fitting windows into a new build or existing property; the rules are basically the same for both.

It means that unless a suitable alternative method of ventilation is provided (and documented), each habitable rooms will need a minimum of **8.000mm²** of trickle ventilation. This can be spread across multiple windows in a room, or all on one window.

A less well documented change is that responsibility for compliance with the regulations lies with the installer - not the homeowner, developer or manufacturer. On new builds there may well be alternative methods of ventilation provided that remove the need for trickle vents. However, it will be up to the installer to get evidence of this.

Will the changes be reversed or watered down?

It's possible, but at the moment it seems very unlikely. The government seem to be determined to stick to the new regulations, despite the overwhelmingly negative response.

Industry bodies such as the GGF have been in constant contact with relevant authorities over this, but have hit a brick wall at every turn.

Even the huge contradiction between new energy efficiency requirements (outlined in Approved Document L) and these rules for better ventilation have failed to sway the authorities. Effectively our industry is now in a position where we will have to supply and install windows with better energy efficiency that's then utterly compromised by the addition of mandatory trickle vents.

Disclaimers and unregistered jobs

We've seen a number of comments suggesting that asking a homeowner to sign a disclaimer stating that they do not want trickle vents waives the requirement. **This is not the case.** Your installations must conform with building regulations, no matter what the homeowner asks for.

Similarly, there have been suggestions that building control can be bypassed by not registering a job with a competent person scheme (such as FENSA or CERTASS) and then advising the homeowner to take out cheap indemnity insurance to cover the lack of building control sign-off if they sell their home. Technically this may be true, but it would be a highly dubious practice, and if at any point in the future building control inspect the home this would be easily traceable back to the installer.

Ultimately the installer is responsible for compliance, so any attempts to circumvent the rules will come back to the installer, not the homeowner.

TRICKLE VENT OPTIONS

This section details what trickle vent options are currently available for different models in the Rose Collection. In response to the new regulations we also have some new options that will be launched soon (June 2022).

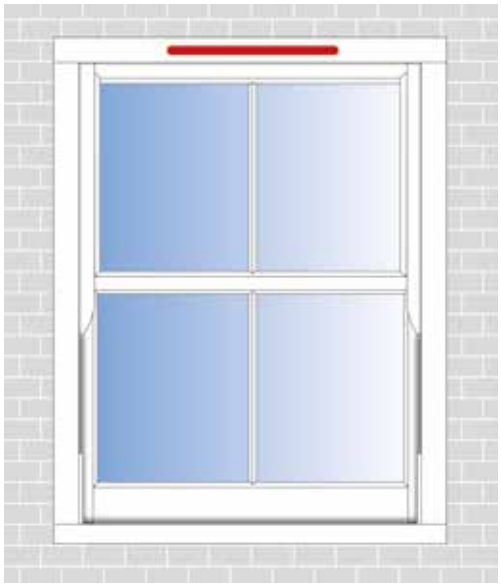
Current options

	VENT IN FRAME	VENT IN SASH	OVERHEAD VENT
CHARISMA ROSE	✗	✓	✓
HERITAGE ROSE	✓	🕒	✓
ULTIMATE ROSE	✓	🕒	✓

✓ Available now ✗ Not available 🕒 Coming soon (June 2022)

Notes

- Current overhead vent sections add 21mm to the top of the window. The current section will soon be replaced by a new option with improved grills and a drip section on the front lip.
- Vents fitted into the frame on Heritage and Ultimate Rose provide 18mm clearance between the top/bottom of the vent and the edge of the frame.
- A vent in sash option for Heritage and Ultimate Rose is coming soon. This involves using intermediate sash profile instead of the usual slim sash profile at the top of the top sash. This provides enough space to fit a vent.

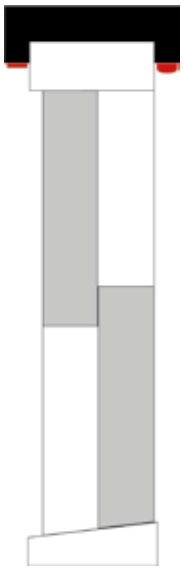


Vent in frame option

- Available on Heritage and Ultimate Rose.
- Not available on Charisma Rose.
- 18mm clearance between vent and edge of frame.

Vent in sash option

- Available on Charisma Rose.
- Coming soon on Heritage and Ultimate Rose, using intermediate sash profile instead of standard slim profile at the top of the top sash.



Overhead vent option

- Available on Charisma, Heritage and Ultimate Rose.
- Flat grill instead of hood on external face. Standard vent inside.
- Improved version coming soon with recessed grill and external drip line.
- New version will also accommodate SMARTGuard technology where specified.

APPROVED DOCUMENT L

Approved Document L covers energy efficiency. Like Document F, it is split into different regulations for new builds and existing homes. Although these regulations have changed, thankfully those changes are simpler than those in Document F.

The regulations

The following are the current and new regulations for all windows except for timber, catgegorised for new and existing dwellings:

	CURRENT	NEW
New build	**1.4 W/m²K (standard)**	**1.2 W/m²K (standard)**
	...OR...	...OR...
	2.0 W/m²K (limiting value)	**1.6 W/m²K (limiting value)**
Replacement	**1.6 W/m²K**	**1.4 W/m²K**
	...OR...	...OR...
	C-rated	**B-rated**

With standard glazing all our sash windows have a U-value of 1.5 and an energy rating of 'A'. Therefore they automatically comply with the new regulations for replacement windows (minimum B-rated). For new builds they comply with the limiting value.

If you use the limiting value on new builds for compliance, another element of the build will need to compensate with a U-value that is better than the minimum standard. Effectively this is trade-off.

All Roseview sash windows can currently be improved to a u-value of 1.4 through the use of enhanced glazing.

Rose collection

Ultimate rose

Heritage rose

Charisma rose

Incarnation secondary glazing

Roseview Windows
35 Stilebrook Road, Olney, MK46 5EA

01234 712657
roseview.co.uk