

GUIDE

The Future Homes Standard, explained

What changes for new homes, and how to build beyond it.



The Future Homes Standard is the next step in the energy rules for new homes in England. It was published on 24 March 2026 and comes into force on 24 March 2027. It applies to self-built homes as well as homes built by developers.

The key dates

24 March 2026	Standard and new Approved Document L published
24 March 2027	Comes into force for new homes
24 March 2028	End of the 12-month transition period

Homes with a building control application in before 24 March 2027 can usually still be built to the current rules if work starts within the transition period. Check the position for your plot with your building control body.

What it is trying to do

New homes should produce at least 75% less carbon than homes built to the 2013 standards, and be ready to become zero carbon as the electricity grid decarbonises, with no retrofit needed later.

What it means for a new home

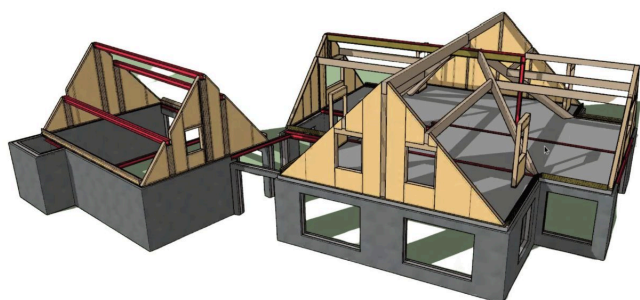
- **Low carbon heating.** Gas boilers are not banned outright, but the targets cannot realistically be met with them. Expect an air source heat pump in most homes.
- **Solar panels.** A new requirement for on-site renewable generation. For most houses that means solar PV on the roof, unless the site makes it unsuitable.
- **Better fabric.** More insulation and better windows, with triple glazing becoming common.
- **Tighter airtightness.** Less air leakage, tested on completion.
- **Planned ventilation.** With a tighter home, ventilation has to be designed in, often with heat recovery.

The reference specification

Compliance is shown against a reference home. Your design can trade one element against another, but it has to meet the overall energy and carbon targets.

Element	Reference value
External walls	0.15 W/m ² K
Ground floor	0.11 W/m ² K
Roof	0.11 W/m ² K
Airtightness	3 m ³ /(h·m ²) at 50 Pa
Heating	Heat pump
Solar PV	Panel area based on 40% of the ground floor area

Values as published in March 2026. Compliance is calculated in SAP 10.3 at first, with the new Home Energy Model to follow.



How to build beyond it

- **Fabric first.** Insulation and airtightness last the life of the home. Get them right and the heating and solar can be smaller.
- **Test as you build.** An airtightness test at the end is too late to fix what is behind the plasterboard.
- **Design out cold bridges** at the junctions between floor, walls, roof and windows.
- **Choose a system that makes it easy.** SIPs and timber frame reach these levels with slimmer walls than masonry, so you keep more floor space.
- **Consider Passivhaus principles.** Building to them, without the cost of certification, puts you comfortably ahead of the standard.

Applies to new homes in England. Wales and Scotland set their own rules. Extensions and work to existing homes follow other parts of the regulations.

HOW WE DO IT

Low energy homes, ready for 2027 and beyond

Our homes are built fabric first in SIPs and timber frame, with the heat pump, solar and ventilation designed in from the start. Many of our clients build to Passivhaus principles. Send your planning drawings and we will give you an estimate within 5 working days.

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