FENSA Guide To Updated Building Regulations

Approved Document F: Ventilation in Existing Dwellings

Building Regulations Updates - Approved Document F – Trickle Vents

The changes to Approved Document F – Background Ventilation require the majority of replacement windows and doors to be fitted with trickle vents. These changes come into effect from the 15th June 2022.

What Do I Need To Consider?

It will be up to every FENSA Approved Installer installation company to comply with the Approved Document and the following questions should be considered at every sale and/or survey:

How Will FENSA Assess The Changes?

Using the questions over the page and the exemptions listed, FENSA will expect to see on the survey sheet whether trickle vents were present in the existing windows and doors, if 30% or less of the windows and doors are being replaced, whether any existing energy efficient measures have been installed and if there is any other ventilation provisions that can be proven will not make the previous air infiltration of the property worse.

You should take note of the Clauses 4.4 – 4.12, which set out the inspection and test requirements that installers should follow. There is a checklist in Appendix C.

Approved Document F: Ventilation

FENSA APPROVED WINDOW & DOOR INSTALLATIONS

Trickle Vents Installation Requirements Guide

Does the property already have trickle vents?

Yes → The replacement windows and doors must also have trickle vents (or another method of background ventilation), and the size of these vents must not be smaller than those installed in the previous windows.

No

Are you replacing less than 30% of the windows and doors in the property?

Yes → No trickle vents required provided that no more than one other minor energy efficiency measure has been completed at the property such as cavity wall insulation.

No

Is there a mechanical ventilation with heat recovery system installed at the building or any other ventilation provisions that can be demonstrated to a Building Control Body that they comply with the requirements of paragraph 3.2?

Yes → No trickle vents required

No

Does the property have continuous mechanical extract ventilation (a ducted system where a single fan draws air continuously from each room constantly or individual room extract fans)?

Yes → No trickle vents required in wet rooms (kitchen, utility, bathroom, WC), but you must fit 4000mm^2 Equivalent Area in all other rooms.

No

Are there any other ventilation provisions that can be proven will not make the previous air infiltration of the property worse?

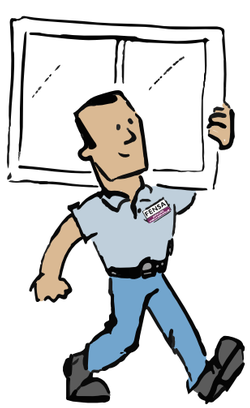
Yes → Record these provisions and save to the work file, they will be required to be assessed at time of inspection of this property.

No → Fit trickle vents

Can you feasibly adopt the minimum equivalent vent sizes set out in table 1 in each window?

Yes → Install the vents as per the table below

No → If it is not technically feasible to adopt the minimum equivalent areas the background ventilators should have equivalent areas as close to the minimum value as is feasible



FENSA APPROVED WINDOW & DOOR INSTALLATIONS

What Size Trickle Vents Should I Specify And Fit?

Room	Minimum equivalent area of background ventilators for dwellings with multiple floors
Habitable rooms	8000mm2
Kitchen	8000mm2
Bathroom	4000mm2

Are There Any Exemptions?

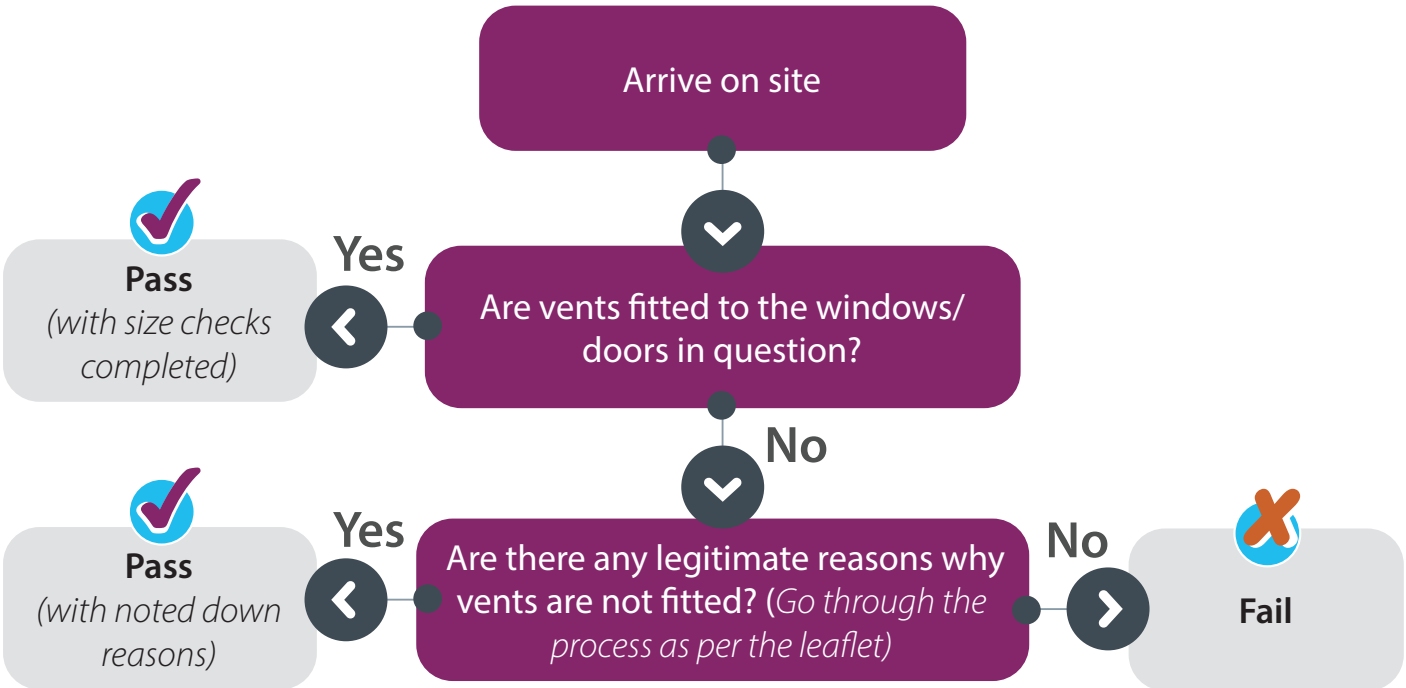
There are certain exemptions that can be considered. These are listed in clause 0.4 of the Approved Document and are for Listed Buildings and conservation areas and other historic buildings.

Are There Any Other Considerations I Should Take Into Account?

Section 2 sets out the provisions for minimising the ingress of external pollutants.

- Clause 2.3 states 'Where urban traffic is a source of pollution, the air intakes for dwellings next to busy urban roads should be both of the following.
  a. As high as possible.
  b. Located on the less polluted side of the building. Mechanical ventilation may be the most practical way of achieving this requirement'.

What Will Your FENSA Assessor Be Looking For On Approved Document F At An Inspection



Approved Document F: Trickle Vents

Frequently Asked Questions

If a customer signs a disclaimer, would the installer be justified and covered to not install trickle vents?

No, a disclaimer is not an acceptable solution. Building Regulations are set out in law and cannot be circumvented by disclaimers.

How would an installer know how many trickle vents to install per window?

It's the room type that sets out the size of background ventilation required. A habitable room such as a lounge, for example, requires in most instances 8000mm^2 (Equivalent Area). This could be made up of 4 x 2000mm^2 or 2 x 4000mm^2 or any other combination.

Would the installer be responsible for designing the window to suit the amount of trickle vents required?

The installer is the competent person and should be designing the window to achieve building regulation compliance where feasible.

If air bricks are in the property, would trickle vents be required?

Alternative ventilation types can be utilised if they can satisfy a BCB (building Control Body) that they are suitable. With "Air Bricks" these would need to provide the correct amount of ventilation and be controllable. Cavity or under floor vents are not background ventilation.

If ventilation fans are installed, would trickle vents be required?

If continuous mechanical ventilation is installed then those rooms do not require vents but all habitable rooms will require 4000mm^2 vents to be installed

If night locking vents are on the windows, would trickle vents still be required?

Yes. Two stage locking handles or night vents are not acceptable, as they are less secure and the equivalent area cannot be accurately measured.

What would the installer do if a customer refuses completely to have trickle vents installed on their windows?

It is up to the competent installer to adhere to the Building Regulations.

Do commercial buildings require trickle vents?

Approved Document F1 is only applicable to dwellings. Approved Document F2 covers all buildings other than dwellings. This does require background ventilation to be installed when replacing windows, but with different size and location requirements.

Are trickle vents required on all doors being installed?

Background ventilation is assessed per room, not per window or door. There may be instances where background vents should be installed in doors. For example, a room that is only opening to the outside, is a door such as a set of French doors in a lounge. Hallways on the other hand, are not habitable rooms and therefore a door in hall would not require background ventilation.

If a window is too narrow for a trickle vent, is it exempt?
If you cannot install the required amount of ventilation in a window, then you should install whatever is feasible.

If a window is fixed and the plaster line is too low to clear a trickle vent, would knock on have to be used to make a trickle vent fit?

This would be a possible solution. A larger frame section may be another possibility or an over glass ventilator.

If a customer has allergies/medical reasons such as chronic hayfever etc, would this be grounds to not fit a trickle vent?

No, background ventilators must be controllable so could be closed at times of high pollen etc. to mitigate the issue.

Are there any exceptions to trickle vents being installed?

Listed buildings and sometimes conservation areas are exempt.

If decibel glass is required, are trickle vents going to be installed?

If sound is an issue then a noise attenuating background ventilator should be fitted.

How as an installer are we supposed to explain that the new energy efficient windows that they're having installed have to have holes in them?

Building Regulations require that the ventilation in your home is not made worse by installing energy efficiency measures. When work is done to homes, gaps and cracks are often sealed up. These gaps and cracks were providing ventilation and in older homes may have been the only source of ventilation.

Further information for homeowners
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/home-user-guide-template/existing-home-ventilation-guide