

Blog Post

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Cleaner Air, Warmer Homes: Key Developments Supporting Modern Wood Burning Stoves

The conversation around home heating and air quality is evolving and recent developments from governments, regulators, and environmental commentators confirm that modern wood burning stoves continue to have a place in the UK's sustainable future.

At the Stove Industry Association (SIA), we welcome these measured, science-based decisions that recognise the vital role our sector can play in reducing emissions while supporting energy resilience and cost-effective heating. Here's a look at the most significant recent developments:

1. Reversal of the Scottish New Build Heat Standard Stove Ban

In a major win for common sense and consumer choice, the Scottish Government has reversed its initial decision to exclude wood burning stoves from the [New Build Heat Standard](#). This policy originally proposed a blanket ban on "direct emission heating systems" such as stoves and biomass boilers in all new homes.



Following widespread consultation—including strong representation from rural communities, off-grid households, the chimney sweep sector and the SIA—the Scottish Government has confirmed that stoves *will* be allowed in new builds plus acknowledgement was given to the very low carbon benefits of wood burning for domestic heating. This is a welcome recognition of the role stoves can play in energy security and grid independence, particularly in remote areas.

2. Future Homes Standard to Permit Stoves in New Builds in England

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has also provided much-needed clarity on the Future Homes Standard. [In a recent letter to the SIA](#), the MHCLG confirmed that modern, low-emission wood burning stoves will be permitted in new build homes under the new standard.



This affirms the UK Government's position that modern stoves are compatible with the broader goals of reducing emissions and improving indoor and outdoor air quality.

3. Advertising Standards Authority Issues Guidance to Brighton & Hove City Council following its "Cosy Killer" Campaign

[The Advertising Standards Authority \(ASA\) recently issued guidance to Brighton & Hove City Council](#) following complaints about its controversial "cosy killer" campaign, which labelled wood burning stoves as harmful and urged residents to stop using them entirely.

A complaint to the ASA filed by SIA Retail Group member, Andy Genovese of Hove Woodburners, queried whether claims about the health impacts of stoves made by the council in the adverts could be substantiate. The ASA agreed and issued advice to the council about making misleading and unsubstantiated claims about the health impacts of modern stoves.



This action by the ASA underscores the importance of evidence-based public messaging. It also reinforces the distinction between high-emitting open fires and modern stoves that comply with stringent emissions standards.

Andy Genovese of Hove Woodburners has documented the steps that he took and the things that he has learnt in the process of voicing his concerns about his council's actions and, with his permission, [we are pleased to share a link to his insights here](#).

4. Recognition in the Guardian of the Role of Modern Stoves in Reducing Emissions

Even long-time air quality advocate [Dr. Gary Fuller, writing in The Guardian](#), acknowledged recently that replacing open fires with modern stoves "should lead to decreases in particle pollution."



This is a critical point: SIA data shows that open fires can produce up to **10 times** more particulate matter than an Ecodesign-compliant stove. With the continued rollout of the latest stove technologies, emissions from domestic combustion are already falling—a trend that will only accelerate as more households switch from open fires and outdated appliances to modern, low-emission stoves.

A Balanced, Responsible Approach

These developments are encouraging. They show that when policymakers, regulators, and campaigners engage with the latest science and data, there's room for sensible, targeted policies that balance environmental goals with practical home heating needs.

At the Stove Industry Association, we remain committed to promoting responsible stove use, encouraging the switch away from open fires and old appliances, and ensuring that consumers have access to efficient, and sustainable heating options and the resources to help them to understand how to use them most effectively.

For more on our work and how modern wood burning stoves are helping to build a sustainable, low emission and low carbon future, visit: <https://stoveindustryassociation.org/>

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Notes:

- The Stove Industry Association was formed in 2008 and is a trade association of stove, flue, component and fuel manufacturers, suppliers and distributors, independent retailers, installers and chimney sweeps, training organisations, competent person schemes and other interested industry bodies.
- With over 230 members, the SIA represents the stove industry in discussion with government departments such as Defra and DESNZ, Welsh Government, Scottish Government, and the Greater London Authority.
- The SIA represents the UK in CEFACD, the European Committee of Manufacturers of Domestic Heating and Cooking Appliances and engages openly with all stakeholders.
- Further information on the work of the SIA can be found at www.stoveindustryassociation.org

SIA Top Tips:

- Choose an Ecodesign compliant stove such as a [clearSkies](#) certified appliance. If you currently use an open fire or an older, very basic stove, consider upgrading. A modern Ecodesign compliant stove releases up to 90% less emissions than an open fire and can be up to 80% less than some older stoves. Your local [SIA Retail Group member](#) can help advise on the best stove for you and your family.
- If you live in a [Smoke Control Area](#), your stove will also need to be Defra exempt. All clearSkies Level 3 and above models are certified as Defra exempt.
- Visit your local stove retailer for guidance on choosing the right size stove for your property and for a detailed installation quote. You can find your nearest [SIA Retail Group member showroom here](#).
- Ensure your stove is fitted by an appropriately qualified competent person such as one who is [HETAS](#) or [OFTEC](#) registered.
- Ensure you use quality fuel. Look for the [Ready to Burn](#) logo to ensure your wood logs are at or below 20% moisture content. Never use chemically treated wood or burn waste on your stove.
- Ensure your stove is serviced and your chimney swept at least once a year – the SIA recommends NVQ qualified sweeps for the ongoing maintenance and servicing of your stove and chimney. The [Federation of British Chimney Sweeps](#) has links to all the main sweep associations. Chimney sweeps are a valuable source of information for good practice and advice.
- Always follow the manufacturer's instructions when using your stove.