

Wood burning and multi fuelled stoves are NOT recommended for use in thatched buildings as they have been demonstrated to present a greater risk to the thatch than other forms of heating INCLUDING traditional open fires. It is accepted that the efficiency advantages of wood burning and multi fuel stoves are attractive to householders and this guidance has been produced to assist them in reducing the risk of fire where such stoves are used.



Fire Protection
Association

CHIMNEY HEIGHT & SWEEPING: Sparks and embers, apart from those generated by chimney fires, are generally of low energy with a short lifespan. Increasing the distance between the top of the chimney and the thatch (by raising the height of the chimney, adding a chimney pot, or reducing the thickness of the thatch) will result in fewer active sparks reaching the thatch thereby reducing the probability of ignition. Tar and soot build-up can lead to chimney fires resulting in extreme flue gas temperatures and burning material being emitted from the chimney top. Chimney fires may cause ignition of building fabric and contents, damage chimney liner and brickwork, and may set fire to thatch directly by radiation or by ejecting burning material that lands on the thatch.

FIT A BIRD GUARD: The introduction of a nest of twigs into the chimney provides an assured and proven means of generating heavy, high intensity burning brands, issuing from the chimney that could set thatch alight even after long distances of travel from the pot top. Sweeping alone will not mitigate this risk as birds may build a nest after the chimney has been swept. The chosen device must not impair the function of the chimney; be capable of blocking under any circumstances; and must not impair normal chimney sweeping activities.

LINE YOUR CHIMNEY: All stove chimneys should be lined, ideally with twin-walled insulated rigid stainless liner. Where not possible due to chimney geometry and access issues, a quality twin-walled flexible stainless liner should be used in its place. The transport of hot fire gases and sparks to internal thatch layers via imperfect chimney brickwork has been demonstrated to be an assured means of starting in-thatch fires. The risk from this mechanism of fire raising may be wholly mitigated by the provision of a liner.

IGNITION: During ignition, when the stove controls may be set to a maximum ventilation to get the fire going, there is the potential to lift heavy burning materials, such as paper and card, from the fire box and for it to be ejected from the chimney over the thatch. The use of firelighters and kindling in preference to paper and card will reduce the risk. The wood burning stove should NEVER be used as an incinerator, eg for sensitive paperwork and rubbish.

IGNITION & REFUELLING: When the ventilation to the stove is increased to boost the fire during ignition or refuelling it is essential that the stove is attended until the controls are re-adjusted to their normal settings. Failure to do so may result in very high uncontrolled stove and chimney temperatures in association with high flue gas velocities. These factors may act to initiate chimney fires (if tar and soot is present), lift burning material out of the chimney, and raise fires through gas escape under thatch if the brickwork is imperfect and the chimney unlined.

FIT A STOVE PIPE TEMPERATURE GAUGE: Stove temperature monitoring is an essential user aid to understanding if the stove is working within its safe limits. Operating at too low a temperature risks coating the chimney with soot and tars which may later lead to chimney fires. Operating at too high a temperature risks fire raising through the ejection of burning material; the starting of chimney fires if tar and soot has built up; and the internal ignition of thatch through faulty brickwork if the chimney is unlined. All members of the household should be aware of the meaning of the gauge sections and know how to control the stove to maintain ideal operating limits.

New Guidance for owners of thatched buildings with wood burning and multi- fuelled stoves

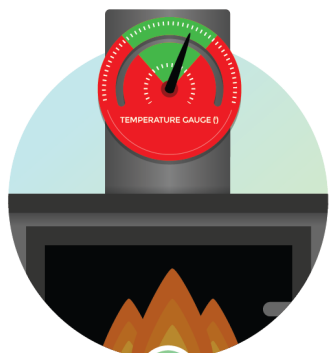
This guidance is derived from results of the NFUM/HE/FPA full-scale thatch fire research programme. The user instructions should be implemented as a holistic suite of measures and are additional to the stove operating instructions, applicable building regulations, the annual or bi-annual sweep, and any insurance policy conditions.



Historic England

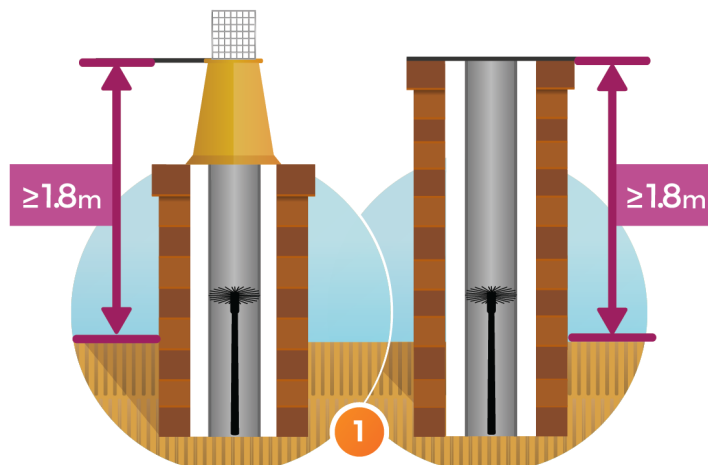


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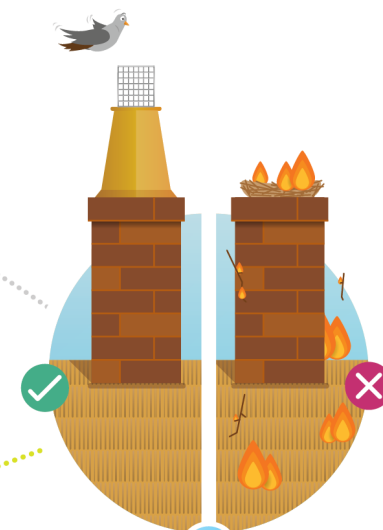
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Understand if your stove is operating safely and efficiently.



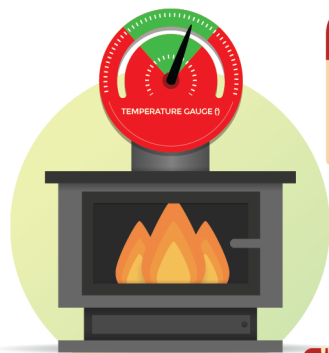
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In new wood-burner installations, the distance between the flue outlet and the weather surface of the thatch must comply with Part J of the Building Regulations. In existing installations, if the chimney does not conform to Part J consider whether it can be adapted to do so. The chimney should be swept and inspected at least annually or as directed by your insurer.



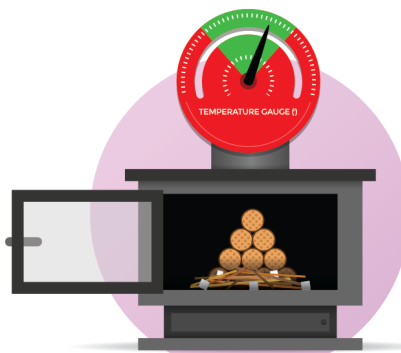
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All chimneys should be capped with a suitable device that prevents birds nesting within.



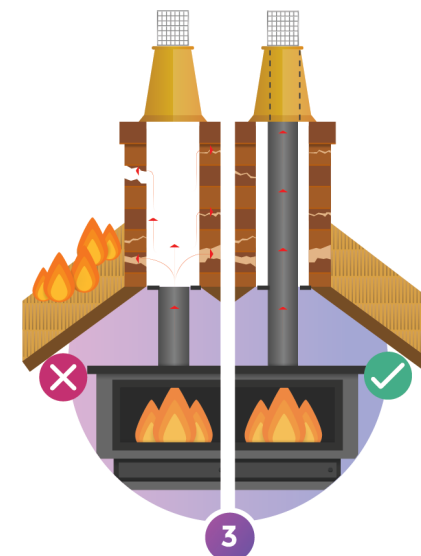
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Stay with the fire during ignition and refuelling until you reset ventilation controls to their normal operating state once the fire is alight.



4

Fires should be lit using firelighters and kindling. The use of paper and card should be avoided.



3

All stove chimneys should be lined, ideally with twin-walled insulated rigid stainless liner to the top of the chimney pot.