

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **High Mass Construction Answer to Global Warming**

Housing pressure group the Traditional Housing Bureau says that a recent report deflates the Government's championing of lightweight construction methods. The statement comes after the Chartered Institution of Building Services Engineers published the report 'Climate change and the indoor environment: impacts and adaptation'.

The report states that compelling scientific evidence bears out that the climate is changing, and that average temperatures will increase by several degrees over the coming century. Issues such as overheating will have a major impact on the indoor environment of buildings in the UK. Using thermal modelling based on the best currently available scientific projections for the UK climate over the coming century, the report addresses the questions of whether passive measures will improve thermal comfort and the effectiveness of different approaches to cooling.

For dwellings, the results of the publication suggest that some building fabric types perform significantly better than others, and that high thermal mass is, in many cases, a key factor in buildings achieving an acceptable level of thermal comfort. The report states: "For the houses, the models show that there is a significant improvement in performance in living rooms, which is in proportion to the degree of thermal mass present in the construction." In cases where solar shading and ventilation control are introduced, "significant differences are seen between both living room and bedroom thermal performance, with the high thermal mass house showing the best thermal performances."

Martin Clarke, Chairman of the THB, comments: "There's a clear case in this report for re-evaluating the types of building methods being championed by the ODPM. Lightweight dwellings with low thermal mass simply don't perform as well

as those with high thermal mass, such as those built from brick and block construction.

“The ODPM is advocating the use of lightweight building methods to fulfil the needs of the affordable housing agenda. These are the types of dwelling that, 60 years from now, could be overheating and unliveable. We need to be wise enough to think about the issues of tomorrow’s population, today.”

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