

Michael Gove hints at imminent gas boiler ban U-turn after warning of heat pump backlash

Under current plans, the installation of gas boilers will end in 2035, though the Housing Secretary has hinted at a rethink.

By **JON KING**
11:11 Wed, Jul 26, 2023 | UPDATED: 10:26 Wed, Jul 26, 2023

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Leveling Up Secretary Michael Gove (Image: Getty)

Michael Gove has hinted at a rethink over Government plans to ban gas boiler installations from 2035, saying the move will impose costs on households. The Housing Secretary has warned costly plans to tackle the climate crisis could spark a "backlash" as ministers come under pressure from the Tory right to relax existing pledges.

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A man lowers the temperature on a gas boiler (Image: Getty)

Asked if the gas boiler ban would burden households with "excessive costs", Mr Gove told the BBC: "It is certainly the case that phasing out gas boilers and moving, at the moment, towards heat pumps, does impose costs.



"We are looking at how we can mitigate the impact on individuals. There are different ways to decarbonise heating in people's homes.

"There is a particular pressure on the private rented sector - they have to move faster than others to meet energy efficiency standards.

"I think we are asking a little too much of them and we will therefore give them a greater degree of breathing space."



Rishi Sunak visits a brownfield site to talk about his housebuilding policy (Image: Getty)

Heat pumps slammed as new alternative could be 'cheaper and simpler' for consumers

As Brits are forced to consider taking on expensive and unwieldy heat pumps into their homes, a green alternative is already underway that could reduce carbon emissions by 6 million tonnes in just a few years.

Conversions to hydrogen boilers could be the more effective way for the Prime Minister to begin making headway towards his net zero goal, experts have claimed.

Senior Tories, including Sir Jacob Rees-Mogg, have been calling for delays to climate pledges after the Conservatives held on to Uxbridge and South Ruislip in last week's by-election.

Energy Secretary Grant Shapps has warned that simply replacing gas boilers with hydrogen alternatives was not likely to work with heat pumps representing the main alternative.

Under current plans, landlords are required to upgrade the energy efficiency of their properties for all new lets from a minimum of Band E to Band C by 2025.

Financial adviser, Gary Bush, from

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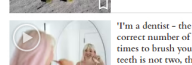
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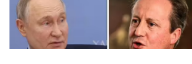
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Mortgageshop.com, told Express.co.uk it is clear air source pumps in the UK aren't going to make the grade as a real alternative to gas boilers.

He added: "It's also true if you have enough land the alternative ground source pumps in the UK do seem to function well."

"Speaking personally, I don't know any landlords who haven't already taken steps to deal with an improvement in the energy performance of their housing stock - so I think rather than watch the EPC (energy performance certificate) rating clock, on landlord properties, the Government needs to seek what work in progress has been performed by way of proper audit. Some 100 year-plus property stocks are a little tricky to nudge the ratings downwards for."

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A sign needs To Let outside a property in England (image: Getty)


Joe Garner, founder and Managing Director at Joe Garner Consulting asked how much money has been spent by the Government on its plan.

He told Express.co.uk: "How many millions were spent on consultation? A plan has been researched, developed and implemented with sound reasoning to just throw it all away on a whim?"


"We need new housing and we need to regenerate old buildings. Every single development, whether new build or regeneration, should maximise the opportunity to improve energy performance.

"It's incredibly rich to suggest any changes are to help families and landlords when every other policy seems to do the opposite."


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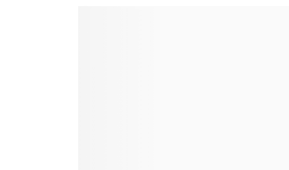


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Mr Gove's comments came as Prime Minister Rishi Sunak considers watering down some net-zero policies to take a "proportionate and pragmatic" approach to the environment.

The Housing Secretary emphasised the need to take steps to get Britain to net zero carbon emissions by 2050, but issued a warning about costs to individuals at a time of high inflation.

He told Times Radio: "It's important the Government does press ahead with appropriate and thoughtful steps in order to safeguard the environment but there are some specific areas where the cost that is being imposed on individuals risks creating a backlash.



"We don't want to get to a situation where the support for improving our environment curdles and turns into resistance."

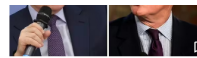
But in a letter to the Prime Minister, parliamentarians including Conservative former environment minister Lord Goldsmith, urged Mr Sunak to show climate leadership in part by accelerating the roll-out of energy efficiency measures which will bring bills down permanently.

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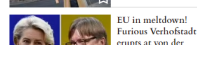
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