

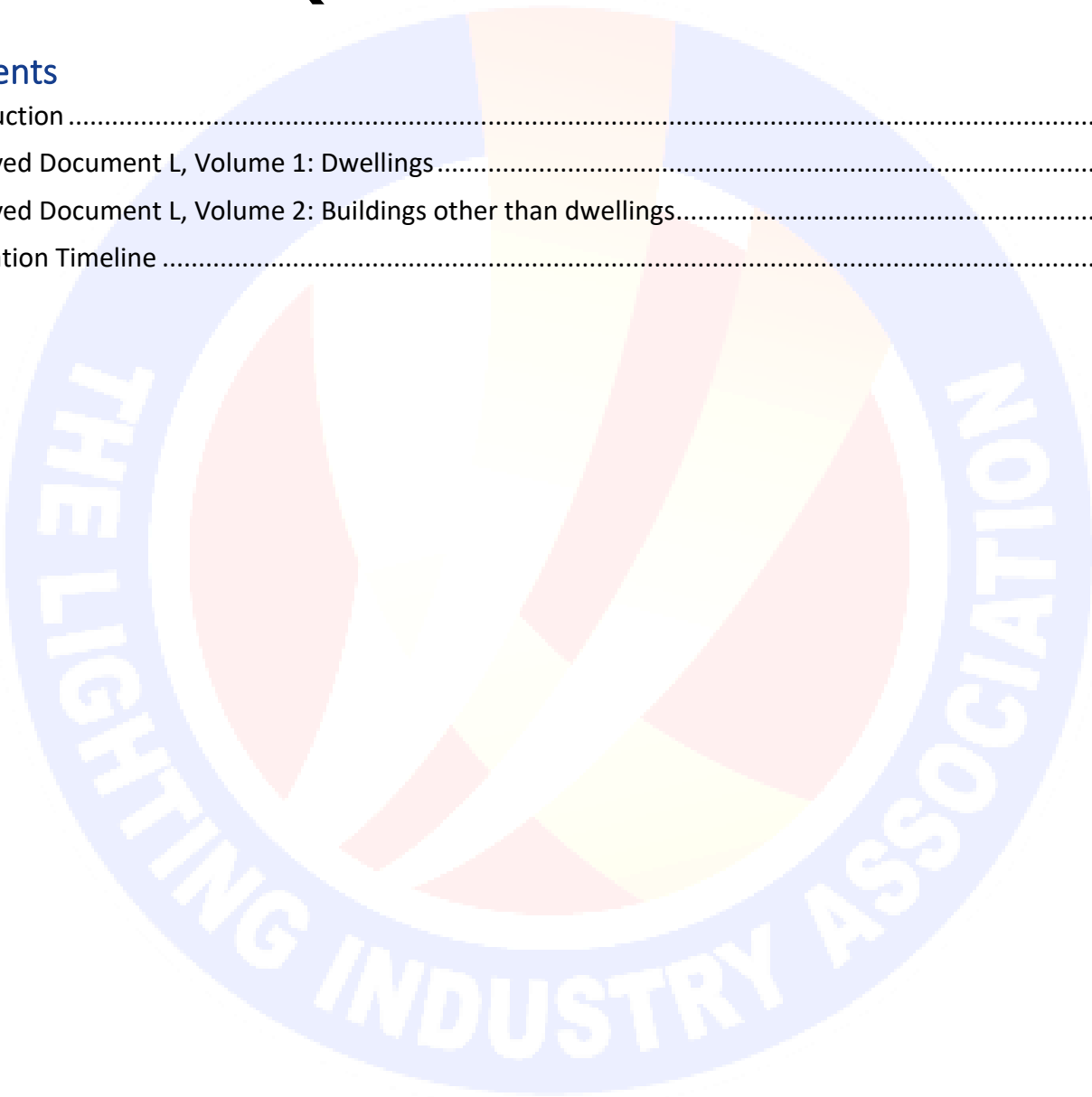


TECHNICAL STATEMENT

2026 BUILDING REGULATIONS – PART L EFFICACY REQUIREMENTS

Contents

Introduction	2
Approved Document L, Volume 1: Dwellings	4
Approved Document L, Volume 2: Buildings other than dwellings	5
Publication Timeline	6





TECHNICAL STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide guidance on the 2026 updates to Approved Document L in England and Wales and the associated lighting efficacy requirements. It does not provide a comprehensive overview of all building regulation requirements applicable across the United Kingdom.

Requirements applicable in Scotland and Northern Ireland differ from those contained within the English and Welsh Approved Documents and are subject to separate regulatory frameworks. The Lighting Industry Association (LIA) continues to engage with the devolved administrations and relevant stakeholders to promote alignment where appropriate and will provide further updates as regulatory developments occur.

Updates to Part L of the Building Regulations in England and Wales (published March 2026) mark a significant step forward in improving the energy performance of buildings. As part of these changes, stronger minimum efficacy requirements have been introduced for light sources and luminaires installed in new buildings and in refurbishment projects, subject to relevant planning consent and approval. These revised thresholds reflect the substantial progress already made by the lighting industry in delivering highly efficient products and are intended to reduce operational energy use and carbon emissions while supporting the transition to advanced lighting technologies.

The Lighting Industry Association (LIA) has worked closely with regulators, in both England and Wales, and LIA members throughout the development of these updates. The LIA has been a strong advocate for raising efficacy requirements for general lighting applications, recognising both the maturity of high-efficiency solutions and the significant contribution already made by its members in improving lighting performance across the built environment. These advances have played an important role in helping to meet national energy and carbon reduction targets.

At the same time, The LIA has ensured that the regulations continue to reflect the practical realities of specialist and advanced lighting applications. In these cases, where performance criteria such as colour quality and CCT tuneability / colour tuneability may limit achievable efficacy, The LIA has supported the use of more appropriate and deliverable limits. The proposals put forward by The LIA and adopted into the Approved Document L (Volume 1 and Volume 2) are an industry position established by members of The LIA.

Looking ahead, it is increasingly recognised that the next stage of meaningful energy savings will come not from further incremental efficacy gains, but from the way lighting is designed, specified, maintained and controlled in use. Greater adoption of effective lighting controls, including occupancy sensing, daylight integration and intelligent system management, alongside high-quality lighting design that aligns light levels with real user needs, will play a central role in reducing energy consumption without compromising visual performance or user experience.

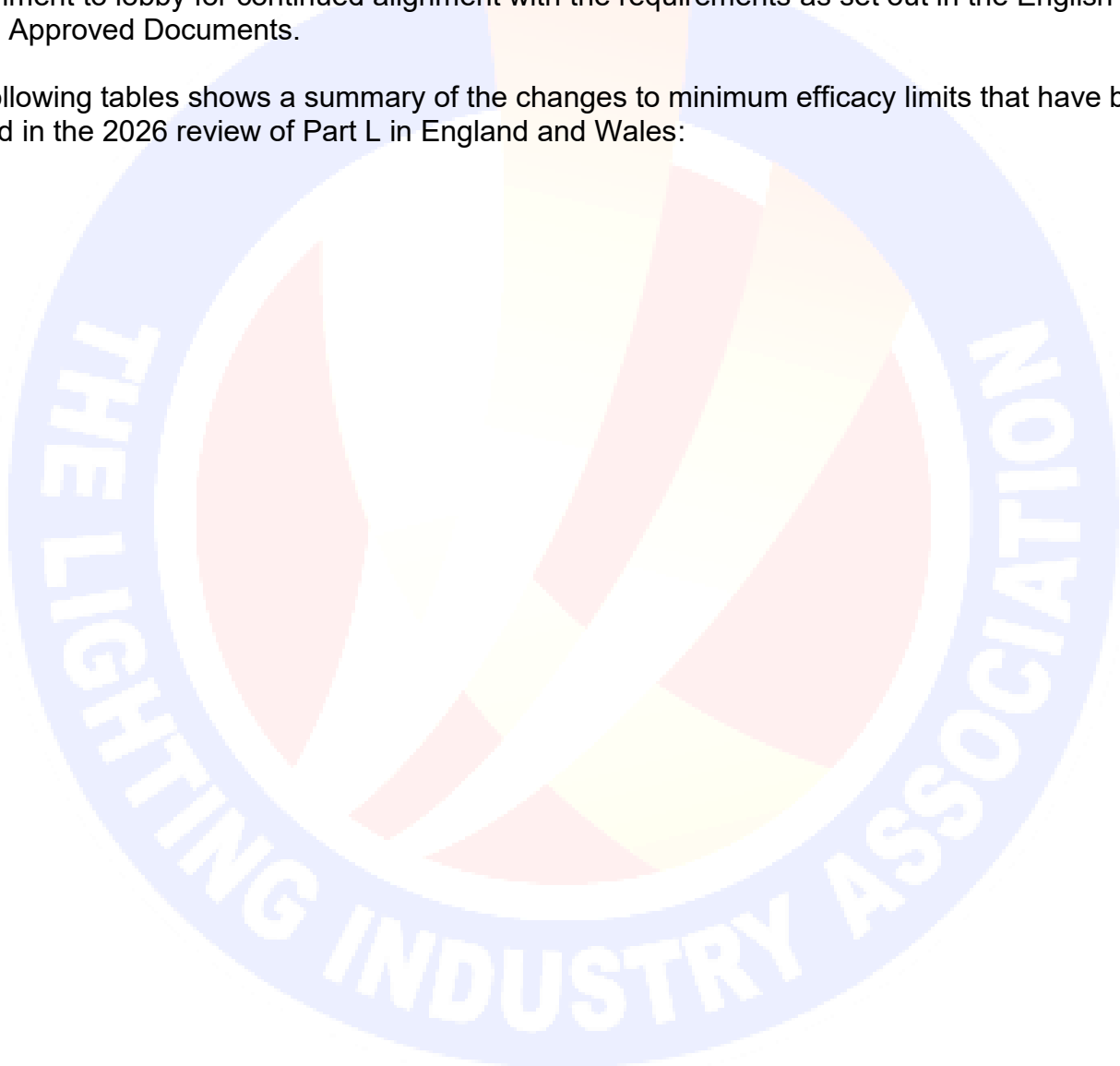


TECHNICAL STATEMENT

Note: Existing buildings which do not utilise current lighting technology may still see significant energy savings by transitioning to modern lighting technologies without the use of controls.

Scotland and Northern Ireland have not opened a live consultation in relation to updates to the Technical Handbook or the Technical Booklet. The LIA has been in conversation with the devolved government to lobby for continued alignment with the requirements as set out in the English and Welsh Approved Documents.

The following tables show a summary of the changes to minimum efficacy limits that have been applied in the 2026 review of Part L in England and Wales:



TECHNICAL STATEMENT

APPROVED DOCUMENT L, VOLUME 1: DWELLINGS

Requirement	Current Requirement	New Requirement
General Internal Lighting	≥75 light source lm/circuit W	≥105 light source lm/circuit W
Tunable White / CRI ≥95	No specific provision	≥80 light source lm/circuit W
High Excitation Purity Lighting	No specific provision	≥65 light source lm/circuit W
Internal Lighting Controls	Manual or automatic local controls	Manual or automatic local controls
External Lighting Efficacy	No explicit minimum efficacy	≥105 light source lm/circuit W
External Tunable White / CRI ≥95	No specific provision	≥80 light source lm/circuit W
External High Excitation Purity Lighting	No specific provision	≥65 light source lm/circuit W
Daylight Controls	Automatic switching in response to daylight	Automatic switching in response to daylight
Occupancy Controls (>1200 lm)	Depends on efficacy threshold	Automatic controls required
Occupancy Controls (≤1200 lm)	Manual control may be acceptable	Manual control acceptable
Note:	For dwellings, each fixed light source or lighting fitting must individually comply with the minimum efficacy requirement.	

TECHNICAL STATEMENT

APPROVED DOCUMENT L, VOLUME 2: BUILDINGS OTHER THAN DWELLINGS

Category	Current Requirement	New Requirement
Internal Lighting	General Lighting 95 luminaire lm/circuit W	105 luminaire lm/circuit W ¹
Internal Lighting	Display Lighting 80 light source lm/circuit W	95 light source lm/circuit W
Internal Lighting	High Excitation Purity Lighting 65 light source lm/circuit W	65 light source lm/circuit W
Internal Lighting	Controls Occupancy and daylight controls	Occupancy and daylight controls
External Lighting	Minimum Efficacy No explicit minimum efficacy	No explicit minimum efficacy
External Lighting	Design Guidance Not specified	Fixed lighting levels should be appropriate to the activity and designed in accordance with the CIBSE SLL Lighting Handbook or equivalent guidance
External Lighting	Controls Occupancy and daylight controls	Automatic controls should switch lighting off during daylight hours and when the building is not in use, unless required for safety or where luminaire input power is less than 4 W
Exemptions	Specialist Lighting Minimum efficacy requirements do not apply to specialist lighting such as theatrical spotlights, stage lighting, gobo projectors and wall washers	Minimum efficacy requirements do not apply to specialist lighting such as theatrical spotlights, stage lighting, gobo projectors and wall washers ²
Note ¹ :	Circuit Watts are assessed on a total building level, not at individual circuit level.	
Note ² :	In line with the definition applied to specialist light sources in Approved Document L1 (Dwellings). Specialist lighting (exempted from minimum standards in Approved Document L2 (Buildings Other Than Dwellings)) also include types such as tuneable lighting and lighting with CRI => 95	



TECHNICAL STATEMENT

PUBLICATION TIMELINE

Nation	Publication Date	Standard Building Implementation Date	Higher-risk Building Implementation date
England	March 2026	24 th March 2027	24 th September 2027
Wales	March 2026	4 th March 2027	4 th March 2027
Scotland	Under Development	TBC	TBC
Northern Ireland	Under Development	TBC	TBC

< END >

