



# Drastic Overheating of Housing Stock: A Wake-Up Call for the UK Government

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## ABSTRACT

40°C has been recorded in the UK for the first time in July 2022 and global warming is already being felt across the country. The Met Office predicts that due to climate change heatwaves are 30 times more likely to happen. Despite this outlook, little attention has been paid to cooling in UK policy and research. There is limited data on households overheating challenges and how households behave towards extreme heat, Therefore, this timely research engaged with 1580 households through an online survey across the UK to explore the households' cooling Challenges, their coping strategies and how these challenges have been changed over last decade. Result shows that rate of overheating reporting in the UK dwellings has been increased from 20% (2011) to 82% (2023) over 12 years. Although some cheap cooling strategies such as wearing different cloths, changing diet, and passive cooling strategies such as natural ventilation, using curtains, shading are still dominant strategies adapted by many UK households, the use of Air Conditioners has increased from 3% in 2011 to 19% during last 12 years. AC usage is going to increase for another 20% next summer when the summer is warmer according to the households' responses. AC must be seen as a last solution and some initiatives are necessary to design homes resilient to summertime heat.

**Keywords:** Global warming, Overheating risk, Cooling demand, Households behaviours