



COMPLITAS

BUILDING COMPLIANCE

What is it, why does it matter, and how
does it relate to the Building Safety Act?
A complete guide.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Building compliance in the UK is entering a new phase. By 2026, tighter regulation, increased enforcement, and heightened public scrutiny mean that property owners and duty holders must move beyond reactive compliance management.

This guide explores what building compliance means in the UK context, the statutory tasks organisations must manage, the growing risks of non-compliance, and why centralised compliance tracking is becoming essential.

It also examines how digital platforms such as Complitas are helping organisations adapt to this evolving landscape.

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WHAT IS BUILDING COMPLIANCE?

Building compliance refers to meeting all legal, regulatory, and safety requirements associated with the operation and maintenance of a building. In the UK, this includes a range of statutory inspections, certifications, and ongoing safety checks designed to reduce risk and ensure buildings are safe to occupy.

In the UK, this applies across residential, commercial, and public-sector buildings and typically includes:

- Statutory inspections
- Safety certifications
- Routine monitoring and maintenance
- Accurate record-keeping and reporting

Responsibility for compliance may sit with landlords, building owners, managing agents, or facilities managers, depending on building use and legal structure.

In 2026 and beyond, regulators are increasingly focused on evidence.

It is not sufficient to:

- Commission inspections
- Complete remedial works
- Assume compliance is maintained

Organisations must have:

- Up-to-date certificates
- Maintenance logs
- Risk assessments
- Records of completed actions
- Clear audit trails
- Complex building data

Compliance, therefore, is as much about information management as it is about physical safety checks.



THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE OF UK BUILDING COMPLIANCE

UK building compliance is undergoing a fundamental shift. What was once treated as a largely operational responsibility, managed through periodic inspections and basic record-keeping, is now a core governance issue with direct legal, financial, and reputational consequences.

This shift was catalysed by the 2017 fire at Grenfell Tower, which exposed systemic failures in accountability, oversight, and regulatory clarity. The subsequent Grenfell Tower Inquiry and Hackitt Review led to the Building Safety Act 2022, establishing a new regulator within the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), formalising duty holders, mandating a “golden thread” of safety information, and introducing stricter approval gateways for high-risk buildings.

Collectively, these reforms mark a decisive move away from reactive, tick-box compliance towards a proactive, risk-based, and accountability-driven model of building safety governance.

FROM PERIODIC CHECKS TO CONTINUOUS ACCOUNTABILITY

Historically, many organisations approached building compliance as a cyclical task: arrange inspections, file certificates, and revisit the process at the next renewal date. While this approach may have met minimum requirements in the past, it no longer reflects regulatory expectations.

In today's environment, compliance is expected to be continuous, demonstrable, and auditable. Duty holders must be able to show not only that inspections have taken place, but that risks are being actively monitored, actions are being followed through, and records are readily available when required.

REGULATORY REFORM

Recent and ongoing reforms to UK building safety legislation have placed clearer responsibility on those who own, manage, and operate buildings. Regulators now place greater emphasis on:

- Clear identification of accountable persons and duty holders
- Evidence-based compliance rather than declarations of intent
- Robust documentation that can withstand scrutiny
- Evidenced accountancy for decision making

HIGHER EXPECTATIONS FOR RECORD-KEEPING AND EVIDENCE

One of the most significant shifts in building compliance is the expectation that organisations can produce accurate, up-to-date compliance records at short notice.

Paper files, spreadsheets, and disconnected systems make it difficult to demonstrate compliance consistently across a building portfolio. Missing or outdated documentation is increasingly viewed as a compliance failure in itself, even if inspections have technically taken place.

As a result, record-keeping has become as critical as the inspections and checks it supports.

THE IMPACT OF PORTFOLIO COMPLEXITY

For organisations managing multiple buildings, compliance complexity increases exponentially. Different asset types, inspection schedules, contractors, and regulatory obligations create a challenging environment to manage manually.

Without clear visibility across the entire portfolio, risks can go unnoticed, particularly when responsibility is spread across teams, suppliers, or managing agents.

This complexity is pushing organisations to rethink how compliance information is structured, shared, and governed.

CULTURAL SHIFT: SAFETY, TRANSPARENCY, AND TRUST

Beyond regulation, there is a broader cultural shift in how building safety is perceived. Occupants, stakeholders, and regulators expect higher standards of transparency and demonstratable accountability.

Organisations are increasingly judged not just on whether they comply, but on how seriously they treat safety and risk management. Demonstrating a structured, proactive approach to compliance is now a marker of good governance and competency.



CORE STATUTORY BUILDING COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS IN THE UK

Building compliance in the UK is structured around a framework of statutory duties designed to protect life, property, and public safety. While specific obligations vary depending on building type, occupancy, and use, most organisations are responsible for managing a consistent set of legally mandated inspections, certifications, and safety checks.

Understanding these requirements is essential, not just to meet legal obligations, but to create a defensible, auditable compliance framework and avoid criminal prosecution.

Below are the core statutory areas that typically form the foundation of UK building compliance programmes.

GAS SAFETY COMPLIANCE

Under the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations, landlords and duty holders must ensure that all gas appliances, flues, and associated pipework are maintained in a safe condition.

Key requirements include:

- Annual gas safety inspections conducted by a Gas Safe registered engineer
- Issuance and retention of a valid Gas Safety Certificate
- Prompt rectification of any identified defects
- Provision of certificates to tenants (where applicable)

Gas safety is strictly enforced due to the serious risks of leaks, carbon monoxide exposure, and explosions, with non-compliance potentially leading to criminal prosecution, substantial fines, or imprisonment.

In the context of Dangerous Substances and Explosive Atmospheres Regulations (DSEAR) 2002, maintaining gas systems is also a key control measure in preventing explosive atmospheres. This makes effective tracking of inspections and certification across multiple sites an important compliance responsibility for operators, however this still presents a persistent administrative challenge.

FIRE SAFETY COMPLIANCE

Fire safety is governed by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order, which places responsibility on the “responsible person” to ensure fire risks are identified and managed, including taking proactive steps to identify fire hazards, assess risks, and implement appropriate control measures to protect occupants.

At the centre of compliance is the Fire Risk Assessment (FRA). This must be suitable and sufficient, regularly reviewed (especially after material changes, incidents, or structural alterations), and used to inform control measures. However, producing an FRA is only the starting point, the responsible person must ensure that its findings are acted upon and that controls remain effective over time.

Core ongoing duties include:

- Maintaining fire detection and alarm systems in working order
- Testing emergency lighting to ensure safe evacuation during power failure
- Ensuring fire doors, compartmentation, and escape routes remain unobstructed and compliant
- Servicing and maintaining firefighting equipment such as extinguishers
- Providing appropriate staff training and fire procedures

Crucially, fire compliance is not an annual “tick-box” exercise. It is a continuous management process. Many elements require routine functional testing, for example:

- Weekly fire alarm call-point tests
- Monthly emergency lighting function tests
- Periodic inspection of fire doors
- Regular checks that escape routes remain clear



ELECTRICAL SAFETY AND EICRS

Electrical systems must be regularly inspected and tested to ensure they remain safe for continued use. The primary mechanism for this is the Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR).

Typical requirements include:

- Formal inspection and testing of fixed electrical installations
- Inspections conducted at least every five years in most rented properties
- More frequent testing where environmental or usage risks are higher
- Remedial works completed within specified timeframes

Electrical faults are among the leading causes of building fires in the UK. As a result, regulators treat electrical compliance seriously, particularly where residential occupants are involved.

Importantly, EICRs generate coded observations (C1, C2, C3), each requiring different levels of response. Managing and evidencing the completion of remedial actions is as critical as commissioning the inspection itself.

LIFT AND PRESSURE SYSTEM INSPECTIONS

Where buildings contain passenger lifts, goods lifts, or pressure systems (such as boilers), additional statutory inspections apply.

These typically include:

- Thorough examinations by a competent person at prescribed intervals
- Defect reporting and remedial works
- Maintenance documentation

Missed inspections can result in immediate operational restrictions or prohibition notices.

FUNCTIONAL TESTING AND PERFORMANCE VERIFICATION

Functional checks confirm that installed systems actively perform as designed. This includes:

- Weekly fire alarm tests
- Monthly emergency lighting checks
- Smoke vent testing
- Generator or backup power system tests

Functional testing bridges the gap between compliance on paper and real-world operational safety. It ensures systems are not only present, but reliable.

EMERGENCY LIGHTING AND LIFE-SAFETY SYSTEMS

Emergency lighting systems must be regularly tested to ensure they will operate during power failure or evacuation scenarios.

Requirements typically include:

- Monthly functional “flick” tests
- Annual full-duration discharge tests
- Immediate rectification of failed luminaires

These checks are critical in supporting safe evacuation. However, they are frequently missed or poorly recorded, particularly in buildings managed through manual processes.

Life-safety systems such as smoke ventilation, access control linked to fire alarms, and suppression systems may also require periodic inspection and maintenance, depending on building design.

VISUAL INSPECTIONS AND ROUTINE MONITORING

While not always classified as formal statutory inspections, routine visual inspections are critical to maintaining compliance.

These may include checks of:

- Fire doors and escape routes
- Safety signage
- Lighting fixtures
- Obvious damage to building fabric
- Obstructions or hazards

Visual inspections act as an early warning system, identifying deterioration or non-compliance before formal inspections uncover more serious issues.

THE INTERCONNECTED NATURE OF COMPLIANCE

It is important to recognise that statutory compliance tasks do not operate in isolation.

Gas, electrical, fire, water, and mechanical systems often interact. A failure in one area can create risk exposure in another. Effective compliance management requires a holistic view of obligations across the entire building.

For portfolio managers, the challenge lies not just in understanding individual requirements, but in coordinating multiple inspection cycles, contractors, documentation standards, and remedial workflows.

THE RISKS OF NON-COMPLIANCE IN 2026

The UK regulatory environment has become more structured, more transparent, and more enforcement-driven. Authorities now expect organisations to demonstrate clear accountability and robust systems for managing compliance.

Key legal risks include:

- Criminal prosecution for serious safety failures
- Civil penalties and enforcement notices
- Prohibition notices restricting building use
- Personal liability for duty holders in certain circumstances

Importantly, regulators are increasingly focused on systems and oversight to provide a full picture, not just individual incidents. An organisation that cannot produce evidence of inspections, remedial actions, or risk assessments may face enforcement action even if no incident has occurred.

The expectation is clear: compliance must be demonstrable at any time.

REGULATORY AND LEGAL RISK

Enforcement activity is increasing, with harsher penalties for missed inspections, expired certificates, and inadequate documentation. Organisations must be able to demonstrate compliance at any point.

FINANCIAL EXPOSURE

Non-compliance can lead to fines, remediation costs, invalidated insurance, and operational disruption. The financial impact often far exceeds the cost of proactive compliance management.

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WHY TRADITIONAL COMPLIANCE MANAGEMENT IS FAILING

For many organisations, building compliance processes have evolved incrementally rather than strategically. Spreadsheets were added to replace paper files. Shared drives replaced filing cabinets. Calendar reminders replaced manual diaries.

While these methods may have been sufficient in less regulated environments, they are increasingly unfit for purpose in 2026.

Traditional compliance management models struggle to meet the demands of modern regulation, portfolio complexity, and governance accountability. The result is a widening gap between intention and execution.

FRAGMENTED SYSTEMS AND DISCONNECTED DATA

One of the most common weaknesses in traditional compliance management is fragmentation.

Compliance data is often spread across:

- Individual spreadsheets
- Contractor-issued PDFs
- Email threads
- Shared network drives
- Paper certificates

Each of these may hold part of the compliance picture, but none provide a complete, real-time view.

This fragmentation creates blind spots. A gas certificate may be stored in one folder, an electrical report in another, and a remedial action buried in email correspondence. When information is dispersed, visibility is reduced and as such, risk increases.

OVER-RELIANCE ON MANUAL PROCESSES

Manual tracking introduces human dependency at every stage of the compliance lifecycle.

Common manual failure points include:

- Missed inspection renewals due to diary oversight
- Incorrect data entry
- Version control errors
- Delays in logging completed works
- Failure to update records after remedial action

Even experienced teams are vulnerable when processes rely heavily on individuals remembering tasks or updating spreadsheets consistently.

As portfolios grow, manual systems become exponentially harder to maintain.

INCONSISTENT RECORD-KEEPING STANDARDS

In multi-site organisations, compliance documentation practices frequently vary between teams or locations. This inconsistency can result in:

- Different naming conventions for certificates
- Incomplete audit trails
- Missing documentation
- Unclear responsibility for follow-up actions

When regulators request evidence, inconsistent record-keeping slows response times and increases exposure.

REACTIVE RATHER THAN PROACTIVE RISK MANAGEMENT

Perhaps the most significant limitation of traditional compliance management is its reactive nature.

Issues are often addressed only when:

- An inspection flags a failure
- A certificate expires
- A regulator requests documentation
- An incident occurs

This approach focuses on rectification rather than prevention. It increases stress, administrative burden, and exposure to enforcement action.

THE CASE FOR CENTRALISED COMPLIANCE TRACKING

As regulatory expectations rise and building portfolios grow more complex, compliance can no longer be managed effectively through fragmented systems and manual oversight. The shift from reactive administration to proactive governance demands a more structured approach.

Centralised compliance tracking is not simply a technological upgrade, it is a strategic response to a changing risk environment.

Traditionally, compliance has been treated as an operational function: arrange inspections, store certificates, and address issues as they arise. In 2026, this approach is insufficient.

Regulators, insurers, and stakeholders increasingly expect:

- A single source of truth for all compliance data
- Tracked inspections, renewals, and actions in real time
- Clear audit trails for regulators and insurers
- A shift from reactive to proactive risk management

FROM FRAGMENTATION TO CONTROL

The case for centralised compliance tracking is ultimately a case for control.

In a fragmented system, risk accumulates in unseen gaps.

In a centralised framework, obligations are visible, responsibilities are clear, and evidence is structured.

As regulatory expectations continue to rise, organisations that adopt centralised compliance tracking will not only reduce risk, they will operate with greater confidence, resilience, and strategic clarity.



HOW COMPLITAS SUPPORTS UK BUILDING COMPLIANCE

As the UK regulatory environment becomes more demanding, organisations require more than isolated tracking tools or static document repositories. They need structured oversight, clear accountability, and real-time visibility across their entire building portfolio.

Complitas has been designed specifically to address these challenges, providing a centralised platform that transforms compliance from a fragmented administrative burden into a controlled, auditable system.

A PURPOSE BUILT PLATFORM

Complitas provides a centralised platform purpose-built to simplify and strengthen statutory compliance management.

Using Complitas enables you to:

- Centralise all Compliance in one platform
- Gain instant insight into your compliance status with real-time portfolio visibility
- Set up automated alerts and deadline control
- Ensure clear accountability and audit readiness

BUILT FOR PROACTIVE COMPLIANCE

Complitas transforms compliance from a fragmented administrative burden into a governed, visible system.

By centralising data, automating tracking, and strengthening accountability, organisations can reduce regulatory risk, protect occupants, and operate with confidence in 2026 and beyond.

GET STARTED TODAY
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WWW.COMPLITAS.CO.UK

