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**Global timber shortage increases house prices – 6th August, 2021**

## Level 4

A global timber shortage is causing problems for the housing industry. It has caused a sharp rise in the price of new houses. In some countries, the price of timber has gone up by 25 per cent. One reason for this is because people have been reforming their homes during lockdown. DIY stores say home projects have created "extraordinary demand". They said suppliers were "working around the clock" but are "struggling to keep up".

A major reason for the timber shortage is climate change. In addition, an increase in wildfires is destroying forests. Many have been completely burnt to the ground. The warmer weather has also increased the number of pests that damage or kill trees. Sweden is a major supplier of timber wood. It has its lowest timber stocks for 20 years. The UK is "committed to trebling tree planting rates". A builder joked that he didn't have time for those trees to grow.

## Level 5

A worldwide timber shortage is causing major problems for the housing and construction industry. The shortage has caused a sharp rise in the price of newly built homes. In some countries, the price builders pay for timber has gone up by about 25 per cent. One reason builders are struggling to get supplies is because people have been reforming their homes during lockdown. Post-lockdown construction and DIY projects have created "extraordinary demand". Timber companies said suppliers were "working around the clock" but are "struggling to keep up".

Scientists say a major reason for the shortage is climate change. This is putting pressure on the sustainability of forests. An increase in wildfires is causing damage to forests. Many have been completely burnt to the ground. The warmer weather has also increased the number of pests that cause damage to trees and stunt tree growth. Sweden is a major supplier of timber wood. It has recorded its lowest timber stocks for 20 years. The UK said it is "committed to trebling tree planting rates". A builder joked that he didn't have time for those trees to grow.

## Level 6

A shortage of timber worldwide is causing a dearth in supply and major problems for the housing and construction industry. The decrease in the availability of timber has caused a sharp spike in the prices of newly built homes around the world. In some countries, the price builders pay for timber has shot up by about 25 per cent. One of the reasons builders are struggling to get supplies is because people have been repairing or reforming their homes during lockdown. Another reason is that post-lockdown construction and additional DIY projects have created "extraordinary demand". A timber trade federation said suppliers were "working around the clock" but are "struggling to keep up".

Environmental scientists assert that a major reason for the shortage is climate change. Global warming is increasing the pressure on the sustainability of forests. An increase in the number of wildfires is causing great damage large swathes of forest. Many have been completely razed to the ground. The warmer weather has also caused a proliferation in the number of pests that cause damage to trees and stunt tree growth. Sweden, which supplies almost half of the wood used in the UK, has recorded its lowest timber stocks for 20 years. A solution the UK has come up with is to plant more trees. It said it is "committed to trebling tree planting rates". A builder joked that he didn't have time for those trees to grow.