

ISLE OF WIGHT COUNCIL BUILDING CONTROL

CUSTOMER CHARTER

This charter aims to tell you about Building Control, the service we offer, the standard you can expect and what we need from you. It is our commitment to our customers.

BUILDING CONTROL

The core function of the Isle of Wight Councils Building Control Section is to ensure the health, safety and welfare of people in and about buildings through enforcing the requirements of the Building Regulations. This is achieved by checking designs at plan stage and inspection of building works in progress. This work is carried out in direct competition with Approved Inspectors in the private sector.

In addition to this role, the Building Control Section carries out vital public safety roles through statutory powers, including dealing with dangerous structures, demolitions and means of escape in case of fire from certain existing buildings.

STANDARDS OF SERVICE

Customer Care

We aim to;

- Provide a high quality, responsive service that is valued by our customers, whilst remaining cost effective.
- Treat all our customers fairly and equally.

What is required of you;

- Provide feedback if you believe our service has fallen short of that expected.
- Offer suggestions for service improvements that would benefit you.

General

We aim to;

- Answer the telephone within 5 rings.
- Be available to help you from 8:30am to 5:00pm for general enquiries and 8:30am to 10:30am and 4:00pm to 5:00pm for technical enquiries.
- Be able to offer professional and technical advice during all working hours in the case of emergencies.
- Give pre-submission advice on all building regulation matters, including a local perspective where appropriate.

What is required of you;

- Contact the surveyor in advance if you would like to arrange a meeting for pre-submission advice.
- Avoid contacting the office for technical advice between the hours of 10-30am and 4-00pm.

Processing Applications

Applications under the Regulations can be by either a 'Full Plans' submission or a 'Building Notice'. When we receive the plans under the first method, they are checked to see if they comply with the technical aspects of the Regulations. We have to make a decision on these plans within the statutory period of 5 weeks. This can be extended to 2 months with your agreement.

We aim to;

- Provide advice on the completion of application forms.
- Register applications, assess charges and send receipt and acknowledgement within 2 days.
- Check submitted Full Plans applications within 3 weeks.
- Advise you of any necessary amendments to your application or additional information required to enable approval.
- With your consent issue a conditional approval, where appropriate or where minor information is missing.

What is required of you;

- Ensure as far as possible that submitted applications are complete and accompanied by sufficient information, including structural calculations, to enable a thorough check to be made.
- Submit applications at as early a stage as possible to enable a check to be completed prior to commencement of works on site.
- Check with us to confirm the charge payable for your proposed works. Alternatively, visit our website at <http://www.iwight.com/buildingcontrol> for information regarding our charges and a simple fee calculator.

Site Inspections

We inspect building work in progress to continually check for compliance with the Regulations. There is a legal requirement for persons carrying out building work to notify the Council once they have reached various key stages.

We aim to;

- Provide a prompt and efficient service for the inspection of works.
- Respond to telephone requests for inspections.
- Provide a same day inspection service in respect of statutory notifications received before 10:00am.
- Inspect key elements of work and carry out additional inspections as agreed.
- Try our best to tailor our inspection service to meet developer's specific needs.
- Issue a completion certificate when building works have been satisfactorily completed.

What is required of you;

- Notify us as soon as possible to arrange an inspection.
- Notify us as soon as possible to cancel pre-arranged inspections.
- Notify us at the stages identified in the inspection schedule or as agreed. Failure to do so may result in us not being able to issue a completion certificate.

Enforcement

The Council is required to enforce Building Regulations and other matters of Public Safety by Acts of Parliament. In the case of non-compliance with the Building Regulations we can prosecute.

We aim to;

- Carry out our enforcement responsibilities in a fair, equitable and consistent manner in line with our Service Enforcement Policy.
- Provide an inspection service that can identify non-complying building work at an early stage.
- Provide practical advice on how non-compliance with the Regulations can best be resolved.
- Instigate legal proceedings as a matter of last resort.

Dangerous Structures

The Council is legally obliged to respond to situations where people are considered to be at risk. These risks include dangerous or defective buildings or structures.

We aim to;

- Provide a 24 hour, 7-day emergency call out service on reported imminently dangerous buildings and structures.
- Respond to reports of dangerous structures within 2 hours.
- Instigate necessary action to remove any danger to the public and to secure premises.

Demolitions

Persons wishing to demolish a building or part of a building have to notify the Council under the Building Act 1984.

We aim to;

- Respond to such notices within 10 working days, notifying other Council Services and other agencies.

What is required of you;

- Notify us at least 6 weeks in advance of intended demolition works.

Provision of Information

In order to carry out the function we require detailed information of construction works and other matters.

We aim to;

- Maintain an archive of all applications for a period of 16 years following completion of works on site.
- Provide copies of completion certificates to customers.
- Publish booklets, leaflets and information on our web-site to provide guidance and assistance to users of our service.

Related Issues

Planning Permission

Building Control should not be confused with the requirements under planning legislation. Some projects may need approval under both, others will need either one. Failure to obtain the necessary consents may lead to wasted work, costly alterations or enforcement action. If you contact us we will assist you where we can and point you in the right direction.

The Party Wall Act 1996

This provides a legal framework under Civil Law for preventing and resolving disputes between neighbouring owners in respect of party walls, excavations which may affect neighbouring properties, and other similar matters. You should ensure that your architect or surveyor advises you how to satisfy the requirements of the Act.

As it is a Civil Law matter between the adjoining owners, we cannot give advice on the Act. However, we have copies of the DTLR booklet in our Reception or the same is available at: <http://www.odpm.gov.uk/>

If you are not satisfied with the Service

If you feel that the standards in this Charter are not being met or have any complaints about the way we have handled an application request etc., please let us know so that we can put things right.

- In the first instance contact the person dealing with the matter.
- If you are unhappy with the response, ask for your complaint to be reviewed, which will be carried out by a Senior Manager.
- You may complain by telephone, in writing, or by visiting the Council offices.

How we are performing

The following performance indicators are monitored on a continuous basis;

These are the statistics for the year 01/01/2002 to 31/12/2002

Indicator	Target	Actual
Decision notified within 5 week/ 2 month period as agreed.	92%	88%
Applications checked for compliance with the Building Regulations and applicant notified within 3 weeks of deposit.	65%	65%

Comments on the Service

We want to ensure that we are maintaining our standards and welcome any comments or suggestions you may have. Please write to John Lutas, Building Control Manager at the address below;

Contact us

Isle of Wight Council
Building Control Section
Seaclose
Fairlee Road
Newport
Isle of Wight
PO30 2QS

Tel. 01983 823580 or 01983 823586

Or visit our website at <http://www.iow.gov.uk/council/buildcon> for further general and technical information and a full listing of staff, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses.