

BUILDING STANDARDS

Customer Charter



Introduction

The Customer Charter aims to tell you:

- What we do
- The level of service we hope to provide
- The standards we aim to achieve
- What to do if we fail to meet your expectations

From this and the information we receive we hope to:

- Improve service delivery
- Show that the process is transparent
- Be fair to all parties; and
- Improve the quality of the service we provide

What we do

It is the intention of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 that work on both new and existing buildings ensures the following:

- Secures the health, safety, welfare and convenience of all persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters concerned with buildings;
- Further the conservation of fuel and power; and
- Further the achievement of sustainable development

The Local Authority acts as a verifier to ensure that the aims of the Act are achieved.

Level of Service

We will:

- Treat you politely and not discriminate because of race, religion, age, gender, sexuality or disability; and
- Listen to your views and give feedback when you wish it

Telephone calls:

- Answer calls as promptly as possible or relay them to the specific case officer to respond, when available, and usually on the same day

- Telephone messages left on voicemail will be responded to in the same manner
- Calls will only be transferred if we can find the correct person to answer your enquiry

Letters, faxes and e-mails:

- Acknowledge receipt of correspondence within 5 working days;
- Respond in full to correspondence within 15 working days; and
- Ensure our responses are written in plain English and provide a quality response, addressing all of the issues raised

When you visit City Council premises you will find:

- Reception areas are clean, tidy and as accessible as possible;
- Our staff wear identification badges at all times; and
- A technical member of staff will be available at Marischal College during normal working hours although it is recommended that appointments are made with specific case officers for enquiries on applications already submitted

Performance Standards

Pre-application discussion is welcomed irrespective of the complexity of the proposals. The service recognises that what looks like a simple application can be complex to a person with no specialist knowledge. Also, on larger applications, it fosters two way discussions, which is beneficial to both applicant and verifier.

An application for building warrant can only be lodged if the application form has been correctly completed and is accompanied by the correct fee. A guidance note entitled 'Building Warrant Applications - Guidance Notes' is available in print form at our reception or electronically on the City Council's website.

We are currently developing our performance standards to provide guidance to customers on the expected number of working days to technically appraise a building warrant application.

It should be noted that more complex applications may take longer and therefore a more accurate estimate can be sought from the relevant case officer.

The following applications will be fast tracked:

- Applications of a minor nature
- Developments that will improve personal health in the community including adaptations of dwellings to benefit disabled residents
- Proposals that are related to key sectors of the City's economic strategy

During the construction period, responsibility for compliance with the building warrant approval lies with the applicant or owner whilst the verifier is required to make reasonable enquiry to ensure that this is achieved. It is not the role of the verifier to act as a Clerk of Works. It is highly recommended that the applicant appoint an appropriate professional, for example an architect or chartered surveyor, to look after their interests in this respect.

Site inspections

In carrying out reasonable enquiry, the verifier will consider when to inspect a development depending on the following criteria:

- The complexity of the development
- The experience of the person carrying out the work
- The level of supervision provided by the applicant/owner

We are currently developing our performance standards to provide a guide to customers on the expected response time, in working days, to a completion submission.

Failure to meet expectations

Complaints do arise. Sometimes we make mistakes. When this happens, we want people to let us know immediately what has gone wrong so we can apologise and put things right.

In the first instance, discuss your concerns with the case officer. Should your concerns remain, please contact the **Building Standards Manager** to instigate further investigation.

If you remain dissatisfied then you can lodge your complaint more formally through the City Council corporate complaints procedure, details of which can be provided in print form by request, at our reception or on the City Council's web-site.



Useful web-sites

Scottish Building Standards Agency
www.sbsa.gov.uk

Scottish Association of Building Standards Managers
www.sabsm.co.uk

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
www.rics.org

Historic Scotland
www.historic-scotland.gov.uk

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency
www.sepa.org.uk

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/buildingstandards

How to contact us

The Building Standards Service is one of the functions of the Planning and Sustainable Development Service.

Opening Hours:

Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm
except for public holidays

Where we are:

Ground floor
Marischal College
Broad Street
Aberdeen AB10 1AB

Access is convenient for elderly and disabled persons.

Contact details:

Telephone: 01224 523756

Fax: 01224 636181

E-mail: pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk

Web: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/buildingstandards