

BUILDING STANDARDS

Customer Charter

Updated December 2023

Purpose of a Customer Charter

A National Customer Charter for Building Standards Verification provides information about the minimum standards of service that all local authority verifiers should meet. This gives customers the reassurance that a consistent, high quality service will be delivered together with access to remedial measures should performance standards not be met no matter which local authority provides the service.

Our vision/values

To provide a professional and informative service to all our customers.

Our Aims

To grant building warrants and accept completion certificates. It is the intention of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 that work on both new and existing buildings ensures the following:

- To secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in and about buildings and others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings;
- Furthering the conservation of fuel and power, and;
- Furthering the achievement of sustainable development

Further services we provide:

- Pre-application consultations
- Inspection of works throughout construction phase in accordance with the Construction Compliance Notification Plan
- Dealing with reports of dangerous and defective buildings
- A duty officer on hand between the hours of 10.00am – 4.00pm dealing with enquiries
- Issuing Letters of Comfort and CCXs for works completed without building warrant or completion
- Carrying out licensing inspections in partnership with the Licensing Board
- Translation for various languages such as Polish, Greek etc.

Our Commitments:

- 1.** Seek to reduce the average time it takes for customers to obtain a building warrant
- 2.** Ensure continuous improvement around the robustness of our verification assessments to ensure compliance
- 3.** Meet and seek to exceed customer expectations
- 4.** Provide a remedy for any customers adversely affected by a failure to meet agreed performance standards
- 5.** Carry out customer satisfaction surveys
- 6.** Address feedback obtained through a Customer Satisfaction Survey to improve the customer experience
- 7.** Provide accurate financial data that is evidence based
- 8.** Engage with our peers and stakeholders through a National Forum that will identify and embed service at national level
- 9.** Deliver and adhere to the Scottish Government Performance and Operating Frameworks which outline our objectives and targets
- 10.** Fully adhere to the commitments outlined in this Charter
- 11.** Provide a consistent format for our continuous improvement plans

National information on verification performance can be found at the Scottish Government website:

www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards

The Level of Service we will provide

We will:

- Treat you politely and not discriminate because of race, religion, age, gender, sexuality or disability; and
- Provide you with a named Officer to ensure continuity of service and advice
- Listen to your views and give feedback when you wish it

Telephone calls:

Performance Indicator	Target
Telephone calls answered within 6 rings	85%
Telephone message returned by the end of the next working day	85%

- Provide you with a specific officer's name, direct telephone contact number and e-mail address after initial contact is made
- Only transfer calls if we can find the correct person to answer your enquiry

Letters, faxes and e-mails:

Performance Indicator	Target
Response to written correspondence received within 15 working days	90%
Response to e-mails within 10 working days	90%

- Ensure our responses are written following the principles of plain English and address all issues raised

Visiting us at Marischal College:

Performance Indicator	Target
Visitors to reception with an appointment seen by officer within 5 minutes of their appointment time	90%

- You will find the reception area is clean, tidy and as accessible as possible
- Our staff wear identification badges at all times
- A member of staff will be available to answer building standards queries during Marischal College opening times, appointments must be made with the relevant officer
- We will provide a private meeting room if requested when you arrange an appointment in advance

How do we perform

- Information provided within our Annual Performance Report will appear on our web-site
- We will publicise our performance in dealing with applications against our targets and explain how we hope to improve
- We will regularly monitor our performance against the targets set out in this Charter, publicise the results and explain how we hope to improve

Customer Charter Performance Indicators

The table below illustrates the performance measured against our customer charter indicators.

Performance Indicator**	Target %	2013* %	2014* %	2015* %	2016 %	2017 %	2018 New Targets	2018 %
Response to postal correspondence within 15 working days	85	100	100	100	100	100	90	90
Response to formal e-mails within 10 working days	85	100	100	100	100	100	90	95
Telephone calls answered within 6 rings	85	100	100	80	100	89	85	100
Telephone messages returned by the end of the next working day	85	67	65	60	94	90	85	94
Visitors to reception with an appointment seen within 5 minutes of their appointment time	85	100	100	100	100	100	90	100

The response times in relation to telephone calls, e-mails and visitors to reception were compiled by random sampling.

**The Building Standards team are currently working from as part of the corporate test and trial following the impact of COVID 19, as a result new systems, MS Teams, are being used for virtual meetings and telephony. Insufficient data has been gathered on the use of these new systems to publish, this will be reviewed in April 2024, at this time the historical data remains valid.

Compliments, Comments, Complaints

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 are still not satisfied, your complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the Council's Corporate Complaints Procedure, which is available on request, at Marischal College or on the City Council's web-site:

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/council_government/feedback_complaints/crc_complaints.asp

We are committed to improving the quality of the service we provide and would like to know your views on the service you have received. Our planned improvements described within our Continuous Improvement Plan will appear on our web-site.

Verification Information

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 electronically on the City Council's web-site.

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.

Performance Outcomes

In most cases, we aim to provide you with a technical response, or issue the building warrant, as applicable, within 20 working days from receipt of your valid application. In some cases, applications for a building warrant will result in a “customer agreement” between you and building standards where the performance outcomes including the target first response period will be specifically agreed.

Dissatisfaction with response times performance

Other than those applications covered by a customer agreement, if you have not received a technical response, or a building warrant, as applicable, within 35 working days from receipt of your valid application you have the right to request resolution to the matter. This may be done by contacting the **Building Standards Manager**.

You may also report the issue to the Building Standards Division by e-mail at: buildingstandards@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Local Authority Building Standards Scotland, (LABSS), offer a dispute resolution service for technical interpretations of the building regulations, the application process can be found on the [LABSS website](#).

How to contact us

The Building Standards Service is one of the functions of the Strategic Place Planning, within the Commissioning Function.

Opening Hours: Monday - Friday 8.30am - 5.00pm except for public holidays – (Remote, hybrid service delivery currently under trial)

Where we are: Building Standards Team, Ground Floor North, Business Hub 4, Marischal College, Broad Street, Aberdeen AB10 1AB

Access is convenient for elderly and disabled persons.

Contact details: T: 03000 200 292 E: pi@aberdeencity.gov.uk W: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/buildingstandards

Building Standards Manager: Grant Tierney

Chief Officer: David Dunne

Building Standards Links

Building Standards Balance Scorecard

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/nmsruntime/saveasdialog.asp?IID=50814&sID=13883

Scottish Building Standards Division

www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/built-environment/building/building-standards

Local Authorities Building Standards Scotland

www.labss.org

Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors

www.rics.org

Historic Environment Scotland

www.historicenvironment.scot

Scottish Environmental Protection Agency

www.sepa.org.uk

Other Links

Aberdeen City Council Planning Information

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/planning

Aberdeen City Council Corporate Complaints procedure

www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/council_government/feedback_complaints/crc_complaints.asp

Building Standards Customer Charter

If you want this document translated into another language or format (including Braille, large print, audio disk or BSL DVD) please contact us via email or telephone number listed below.

Jeżeli ten dokument jest wymagany w innej wersji językowej lub formacie (w dużym druku lub na dyskiecie audio) proszę się skontaktować z

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Если Вы хотите получить этот документ, переведенным на другой язык или в другом формате (крупным шрифтом или на звуковом диске), пожалуйста, свяжитесь по

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如果你需要把文件翻译成另一种语言或者把文件变成另一种格式（大号字体或声盘），请通过以下的邮件或电话方式联系我们。

Ma tha thu ag iarraidh eadar-theangachadh den sgrìobhainn seo ann an cànan neo cruth eile (clò mòr neo clàr claidinneach) feuch an cuir thu fios gu

If you are deaf or have a hearing impairment, you can still communicate with the Council via Text Relay by dialling 18001 + telephone number:

03000 200 292

