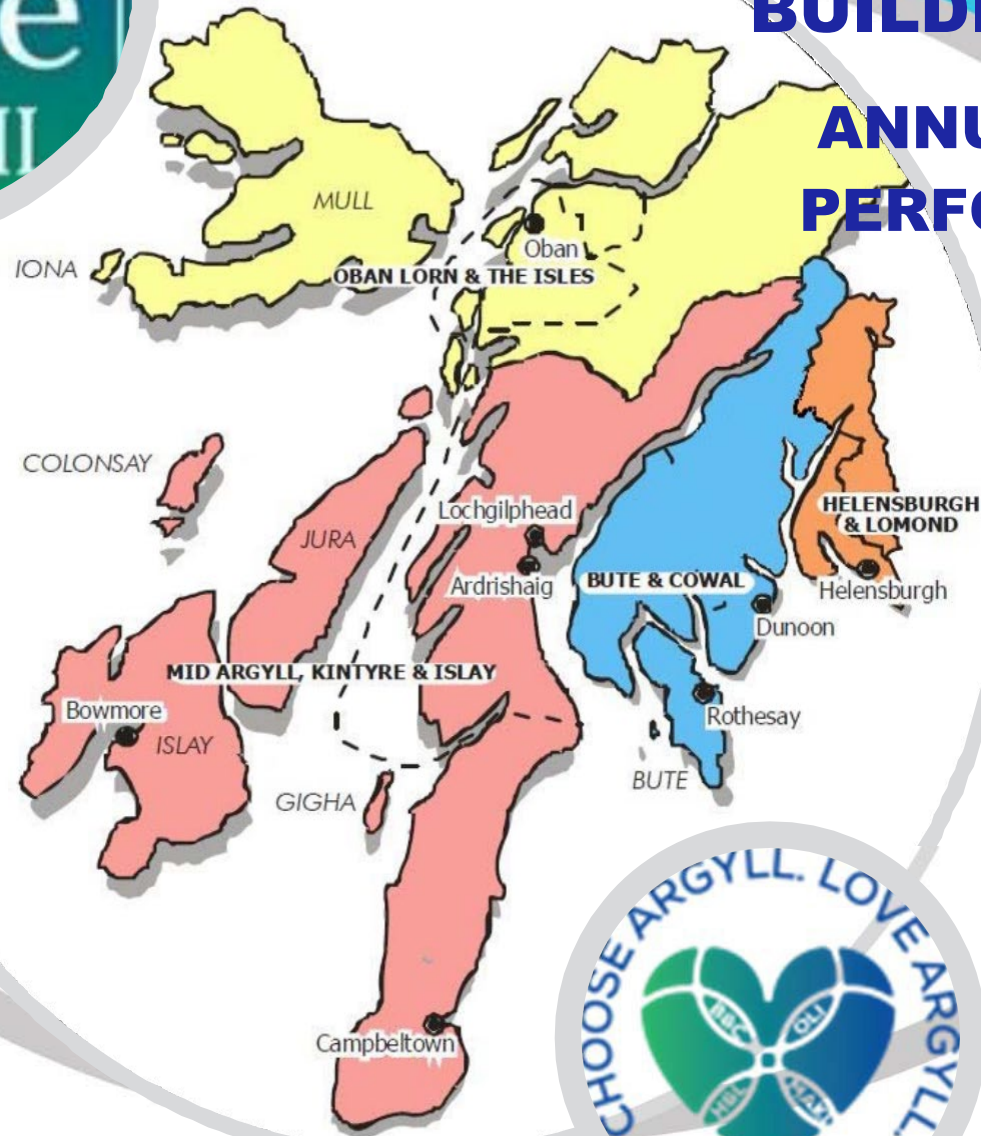




BUILDING STANDARDS ANNUAL VERIFICATION PERFORMANCE REPORT

2023 -2024



Building Standards
Development and Economic Growth
ANNUAL VERIFICATION PERFORMANCE REPORT 2023-2024
January 2024

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Document History

| <u>Version</u> | <u>Issue Date</u> | <u>Reviewed</u> | <u>Summary of Changes</u> |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|--|
| 2023-24 – Q1 | 30/07/23 | Scorecard Team | Updated Document – Quarter 1 (2023/24) |
| 2023-24 – Q2 | 24/10/23 | Scorecard Team | Updated Document – Quarter 2 (2023/24) |
| 2023-24 – Q3 | 29/01/23 | Scorecard Team | Updated Document – Quarter 3 (2023/24) |



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1.0 Introduction to the verifier

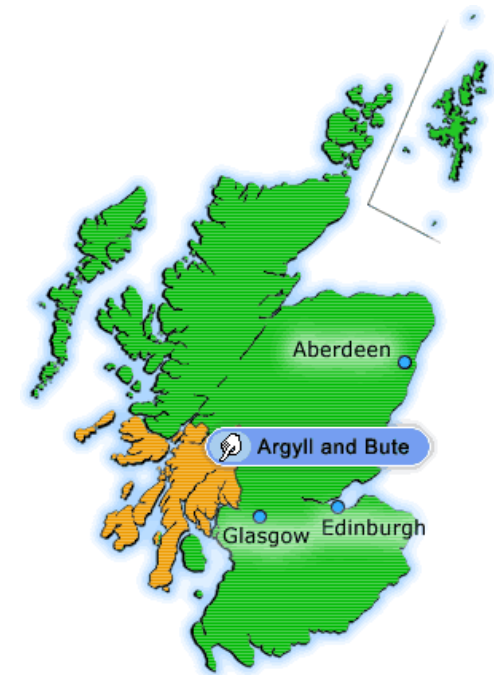
The verification performance is a strategic planning and management tool that provides information about the local authority building standards service, communicates the vision and strategy, and sets out performance against strategic goals and targets.

Building Standards Verifiers in Scotland are required to utilise the performance report to manage, monitor, review and develop strategies for their business, and should focus on the performance frameworks core perspectives and cross-cutting themes.

[Argyll and Bute Council](#) area comprises a large mixed urban, rural and island communities. Created in April 1996 it was formed by combining the former Argyll and Bute District Council area and the Helensburgh and Lomond area of the former Dumbarton District Council to form the second largest geographical area of any Scottish Local Authority at 7,000 square kilometres (8.77% of Scotland's total land area) and third sparsest population density of the 32 Scottish local authorities, with an average density of just 0.12 persons per hectare, which is far less than the 0.70 persons per hectare for Scotland generally. From Helensburgh, west to the Atlantic islands of Tiree and Coll, and from the Mull of Kintyre, north to the edge of Glencoe. Argyll and Bute is an area of contrast and diversity with 6 main towns, 48 small towns and villages, and 151 minor settlements across the mainland and 25 inhabited islands with a population of 15105.

With a coastline of 3,723km, and a declining and ageing population, 59.4% of Argyll residents are aged between 16-64, which is less than the 64.2% Scottish average. The current population in Argyll is 86,300 (42,900 male and 43,300 female) (2018), covering a large dispersed geographical area particular service delivery arrangements have been formulated to meet the needs of the diverse communities we serve. Forty- five per cent of Argyll and Bute's population live in settlements smaller than 3,000 people, or out with settlements altogether, of which seventeen per cent live on Islands.

Because of the rural nature of the area, the pattern of employment in Argyll and Bute is different to the Scottish average.



The proportions of people working in the agriculture, forestry and fishing sectors and tourism-related activities are far higher than Scottish averages. Proportions of employment in tourism, hotels and restaurants are higher in the more rural areas than in the urban areas (table 1).

Table 1 - Employment by industry (2018)

(Source: ONS business register and employment survey)

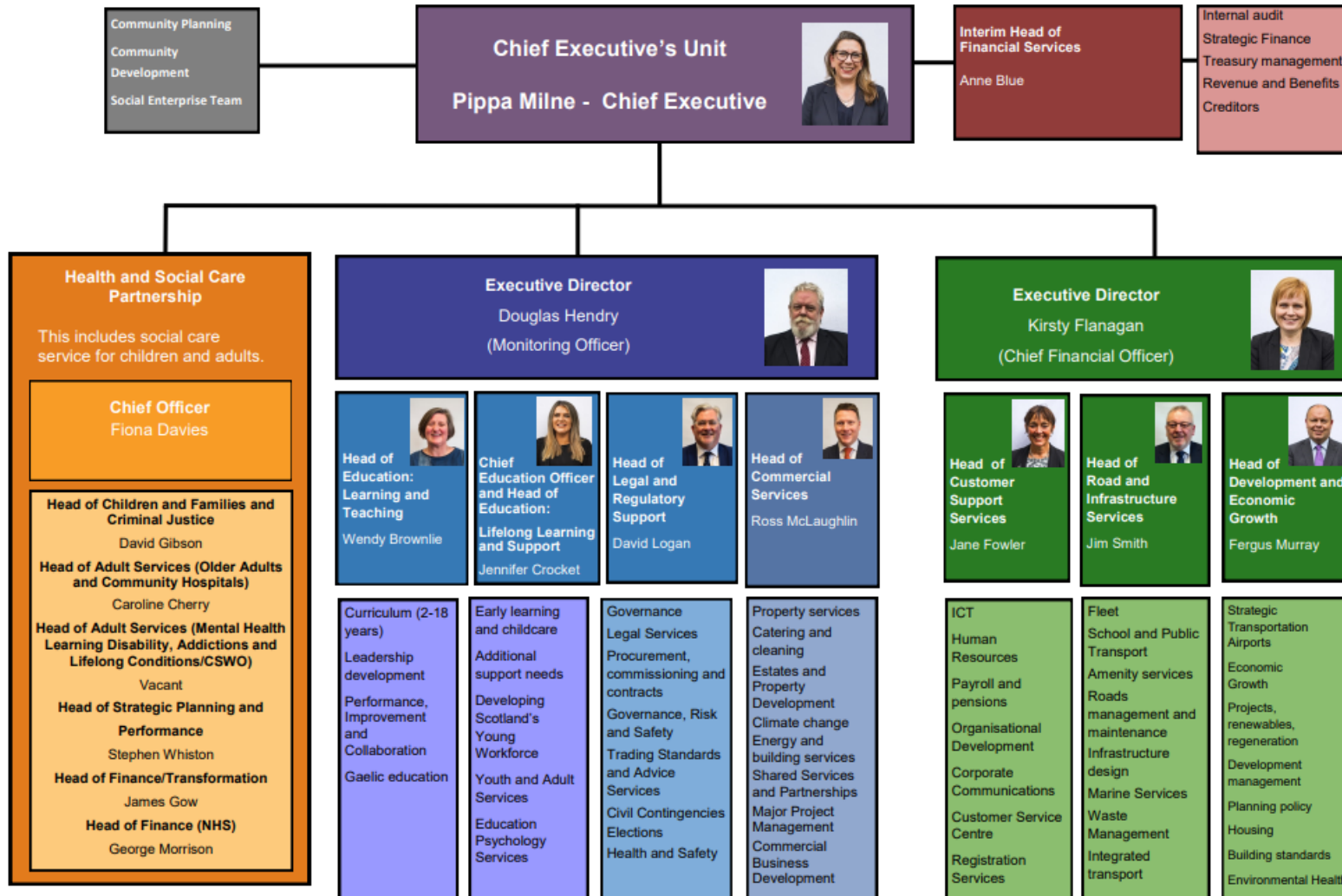
| Employee jobs (2018) | | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| | Argyll And Bute (Employee Jobs) | Argyll And Bute (%) | Scotland (%) | Great Britain (%) |
| Total Employee Jobs | 35,000 | - | - | - |
| Full-Time | 22,000 | 62.9 | 66.3 | 67.6 |
| Part-Time | 14,000 | 40.0 | 33.6 | 32.4 |
| Employee Jobs By Industry | | | | |
| B : Mining And Quarrying | 200 | 0.6 | 1.1 | 0.2 |
| C : Manufacturing | 2,000 | 5.7 | 7.2 | 8.1 |
| D : Electricity, Gas, Steam And Air Conditioning Supply | 300 | 0.9 | 0.7 | 0.5 |
| E : Water Supply; Sewerage, Waste Management And Remediation Activities | 175 | 0.5 | 0.8 | 0.7 |
| F : Construction | 2,000 | 5.7 | 5.5 | 4.7 |
| G : Wholesale And Retail Trade; Repair Of Motor Vehicles And Motorcycles | 4,000 | 11.4 | 13.9 | 15.2 |
| H : Transportation And Storage | 1,750 | 5.0 | 4.3 | 4.8 |
| I : Accommodation And Food Service Activities | 4,500 | 12.9 | 8.1 | 7.6 |
| J : Information And Communication | 400 | 1.1 | 3.2 | 4.2 |
| K : Financial And Insurance Activities | 200 | 0.6 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| L : Real Estate Activities | 600 | 1.7 | 1.3 | 1.7 |
| M : Professional, Scientific And Technical Activities | 1,500 | 4.3 | 7.1 | 8.7 |
| N : Administrative And Support Service Activities | 3,000 | 8.6 | 8.2 | 9.1 |
| O : Public Administration And Defence; Compulsory Social Security | 4,000 | 11.4 | 6.3 | 4.3 |
| P : Education | 2,500 | 7.1 | 7.8 | 8.9 |
| Q : Human Health And Social Work Activities | 5,000 | 14.3 | 15.7 | 13.2 |
| R : Arts, Entertainment And Recreation | 1,500 | 4.3 | 2.8 | 2.5 |
| S : Other Service Activities | 600 | 1.7 | 2.1 | 2.0 |

Argyll and Bute’s economy has a high dependency on industries, such as public sector, construction, tourism, agriculture, forestry and fishing, which are facing considerable economic and environmental challenges.

Argyll and Bute has a total of 35,000 jobs (22,000 full-time and 14,000 part-time) The part-time percentage is far higher than the Scottish average at 37% (Scottish average 33.6%) and lower for full-time jobs at 63% (Scottish average 66.3%)



The Building Standards Service sits within the Development and Infrastructure Services Directorate.



Building Standards also has other responsibilities, which while not directly part of the verifier's functions, enhance the role by providing expertise on a variety of legislative functions and requirements, such as:

Dangerous Structures

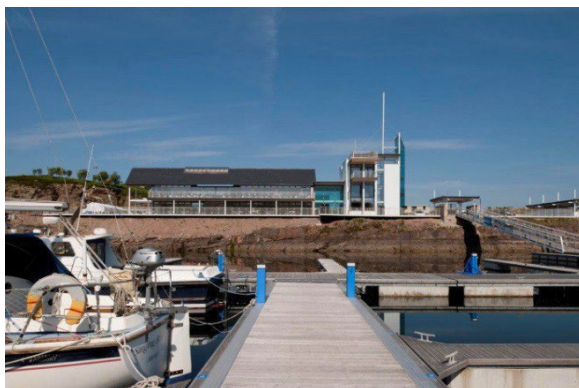
There are occasions when public safety may become jeopardised by the condition of buildings.

If action is required to safeguard the occupants or general public, Building Standards will take whatever action is necessary to remove the danger by enforcing the requirements of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. Building Standards responds to numerous reports of Dangerous Buildings every year.



Unauthorised Works

Building Standards is responsible for enforcing the requirements of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003 on buildings constructed without warrant or in contravention of conditions of warrant, and buildings whose limited life has expired.



Licensing

Building Standards advises the independent Licensing Board and Council's Licensing Committee on suitability of premises such as public houses, restaurants, cinemas, theatres, entertainment venues and other premises. Building Standards gives consideration to various areas including means of escape, emergency lighting, accessibility, occupant capacity and structural stability.

Built Environment Regeneration

Building Standards plays a key role in the Council's physical regeneration projects and are a member of the project team providing advice, legislative interventions and monitoring work as necessary.



Public Events

Building Standards has a considerable input into major events at outdoor venues, particularly in relation to crowd capacity, means of escape, raised structures, crowd control barriers and general safety matters. Such events include the annual Cowal Highland Gathering in Dunoon and numerous Music Festivals throughout the area.

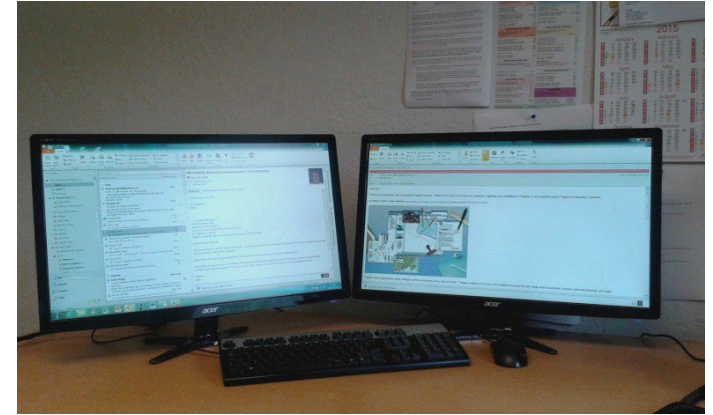
Houses in Multiple Occupation

Building Standards advises the Council's Licensing Committee on the suitability of premises for Houses in Multiple Occupation. The advice provided on conditions and standards are based on the Scottish Government's Guidance on HMO Standards with some local variations appropriate to Argyll.

Document Searches

Building Standards can provide information about properties where Building Warrants, Completion Certificates or Letters of Comfort have been issued.

Please note that this service is only available for records less than 25 years old or 50 years old for major applications and information can be viewed or copied with consent.



Currently for this quarter, non-verifier work accounts for approximately 13% of all officer time, averaged over the authority. However due to the continuing lack of property maintenance within the urban landscape, primarily in Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Rothesay, there is an increasing trend towards additional officer time, in these areas, being occupied by responding to and dealing with dangerous/defective buildings or structures.

2.1 Building Standards Verification Service Information

The Building Standards Section is part of Development and Economic Growth within the Development and Infrastructure Services Directorate and has an important role to play in the aims, values and priorities, either directly or indirectly, of the Directorate and the Council as a whole.

The purpose of the Building Standards system is to protect the public interest. The system sets out the essential standards that are required to be met when building work or conversion of a building takes place in order to meet building regulations.

The Building Standards system checks that proposed building work or conversion of a building meets standards; inspections are limited to a minimal necessary to ensure that legislation is not avoided. The control of work on site is not the responsibility of Building Standards but is a matter for contracts and arrangements in place between a builder and client.

Verifiers appointed by Scottish Ministers are responsible for the independent checking of applications for building warrants to construct or demolish buildings, to provide services, fittings or equipment in buildings, or for conversions and for the conservation of fuel and power and further achievement of sustainable development.

This is primarily achieved through the processing of Building Warrant applications and the acceptance of Completion Certificates to verify compliance with the Building Regulations as required by the Building (Scotland) Act and associated legislation. This is further supported through the provision of inclusive access to services and information at local level, delivered within available resources and the application of “best value principles”

Argyll and Bute Council Building Standards holds the Customer Service Excellence Award thus ensuring that the service operates in a customer focused manner which facilitates development and assists the local economy.

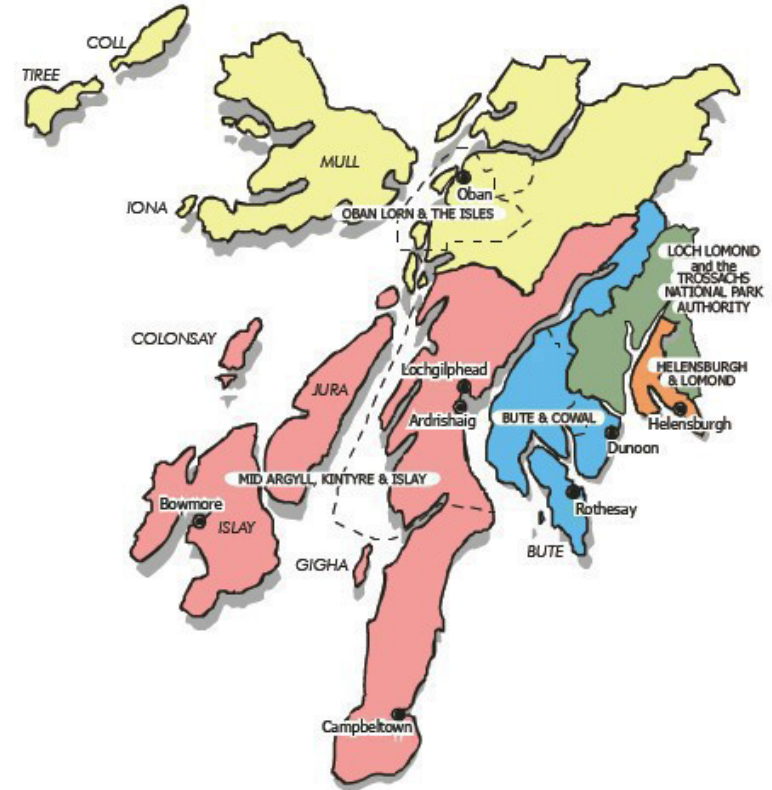
The Building Standards Service provides a devolved service from four areas and one sub-area office strategically located throughout Argyll and Bute.

These being:

- Bute and Cowal area office located in Dunoon Town Centre.
- Helensburgh and Lomond area office located in the Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre in Helensburgh.
- Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay area office located in Lochgilphead.
- Oban, Lorn and the Isles area office located in Oban Town Centre.

Area teams generally comprise a team leader, qualified and experienced surveyors, and assistant/trainee surveyors, with shared area administration support staff, from within Development and Infrastructure Services.

The Building Standards Principal Team Leader exercises advisory control and co-ordination again with shared administration resource and is based within the Mid Argyll, Kintyre and Islay area office in Lochgilphead.



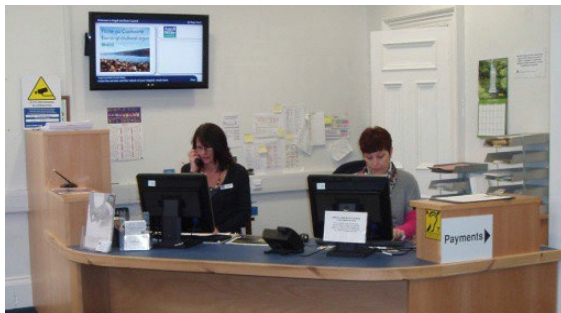
Additionally the Council's Customer Service Centre incorporating "Golden Numbers" was established in 2007 as part of the corporate strategy to centralise the management of initial customer contacts to the Council with Building Standards being online in January 2012. Its purpose is to try to resolve customer's enquiries at first point of contact without having to pass the call to the back office. The Building Standards "Golden Number" is **01546 605518** with Customer Service Centre Advisers available from 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday.



The customer services advisors who will answer the calls will:

- Answer any general building standards enquiries where possible.
- Pass calls to appropriate officers where requested, or pass on messages by email.
- Take payments for any building standards related fees.
- Advise customers of the progress of a particular building standards application.
- Deal with requests for building standards application forms.
- Where a customer is seeking an appointment, advisors will pass on details of their requirements to the relevant officer to arrange a call-back.

In 2022/23 it dealt with 8066 (a decrease of 7% from 2021/22) calls from customers to Golden Numbers and transferred 9% of these to the back office.



Staffed Customer Service Centre Points have been established throughout Argyll and Bute with advisers available Monday to Friday at the times detailed below:

[Dunoon Service Point](#), Ellis Lodge, 5 Argyll Road, Dunoon, PA23 8ES

Opening hours - 9am to 12 noon

[Islay Service Point](#), Jamieson Street, Bowmore, Isle of Islay, PA43 7HL

Opening hours - 9am to 12 noon

[Campbeltown Service Point](#), Burnet Building, St John Street, Campbeltown, PA28 6BJ

Opening hours - 9am to 12 noon

[Helensburgh Service Point](#), The Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre, 38 East Clyde Street, Helensburgh, G84 7PG

Opening hours - 9am to 12 noon

[Mull Service Point](#), Breadalbane Street, Tobermory, Isle of Mull, PA75 6PX

Opening hours - 9am to 12 noon

[Lochgilphead Service Point](#), 1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD

Opening hours - 9am to 12 noon

[Oban Service Point](#), Municipal Building, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AW

Opening hours - 9am to 12 noon

[Tiree Service Point](#), The Business Centre, Crossapol, Isle of Tiree, PA77 6UP

Opening hours - 1.30pm to 4.15pm

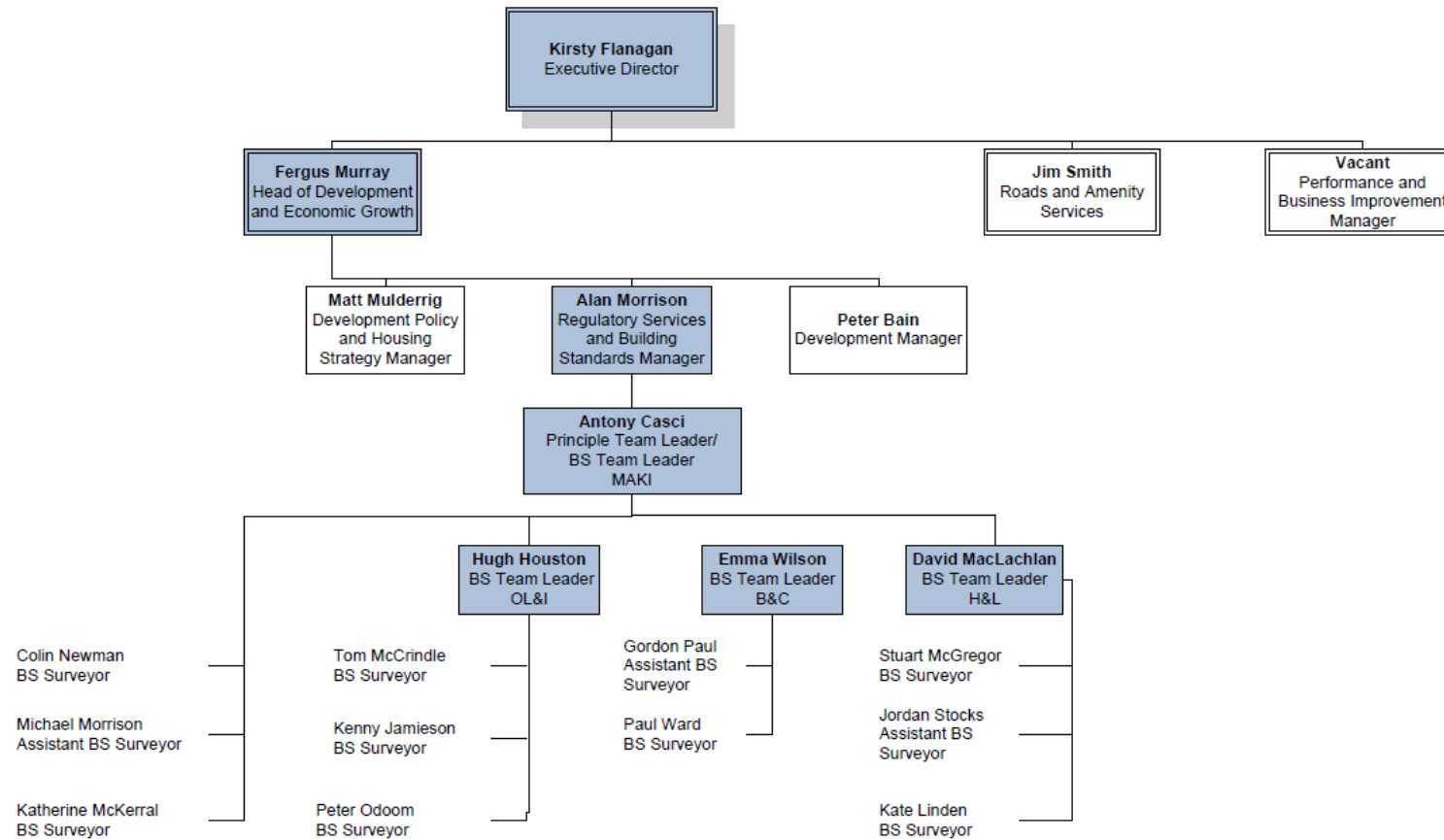
[Colonsay Service Point](#), Scalasaig, Isle of Colonsay, PA61 7YW

Opening hours - 9.30am to 12.30pm

[Jura Service Point](#), Schoolhouse, Craighouse, Isle of Jura PA60 7XG

Opening hours – 9.30am to 12.30pm

The chart below indicates the current arrangement. Building Standards work closely with our [Planning](#), [Roads and Travel](#), [Environmental Health](#), [Licensing](#) and [Housing](#) colleagues.



BUILDING STANDARDS STAFFING POSITION AS AT 31st December 2023

| | | | | |
|--|------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|-----------------|
| HEAD OF BUILDING STANDARDS VERIFICATION SERVICE | Chief Executive | Directors | Heads of Service | Managers |
| | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |

| | | Building Standards Verification Service | Other |
|-------------------------------------|------------------------|---|--|
| Manager | <i>Number of Posts</i> | 1 Regulatory Services & Building Standards Manager 1 Principal Team Leader | Full Time |
| | <i>Vacant</i> | 3 Team Leaders | |
| Main Grade Posts (Surveyors) | <i>Number of Posts</i> | 10.5 | 10 full time posts and 1 part time post. |
| | <i>Vacant - One</i> | | |
| Technician | <i>Number of Posts</i> | 1 System Technician (Job Share) | 1 post (2 staff) |
| | <i>Vacant</i> | | |
| Office Support/Clerical | <i>Number of Posts</i> | 7 - Shared Resource with Development Management (includes 1 vacant post) 1 – Senior Admin Support Officer (includes 0.5 vacant post) | |
| | | | |
| TOTAL | | 17.5 (this figure does not include shared support staff) | |

| Staff Age Profile | Number |
|--------------------------|---------------|
| Under 30 | 0 |
| 30 – 39 | 6 |
| 40 – 49 | 6 |
| 50 and over | 12 |



3. Strategic Objectives

Argyll and Bute Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013 - 2023
Argyll and Bute Council's Corporate Plan 2013-17 and beyond

Realizing our potential together – our shared long term vision

Argyll and Bute Council is undergoing a significant period of change in order to build a positive future - focusing on shared best practice, past successes and forthcoming challenges. We have significantly improved our best value arrangements, increased our pace of change and improved our approach to corporate planning, strategic management and performance management.

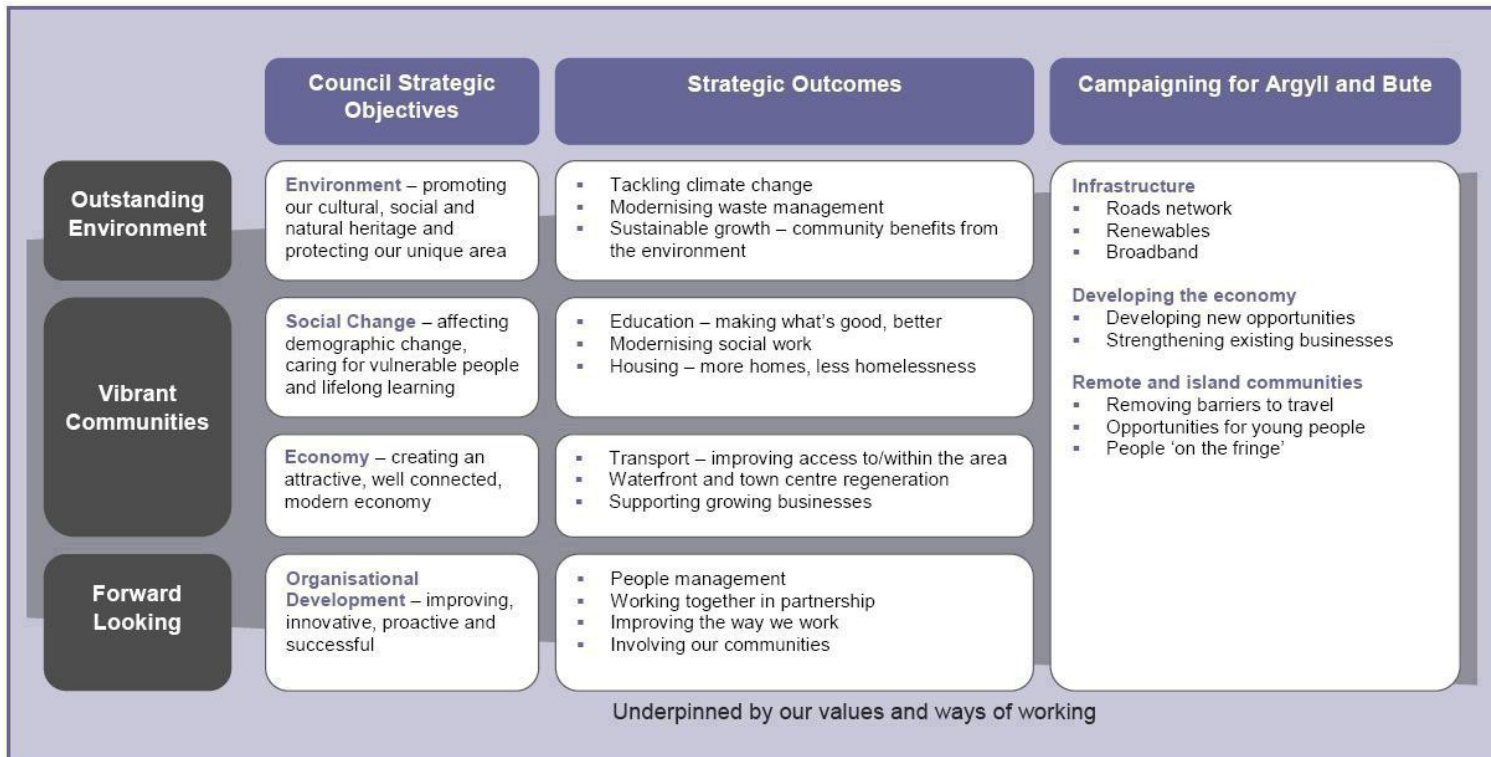
Our [Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement](#) together with our [Corporate Plan](#) focuses on improving services on the ground by continually challenging ourselves and assessing our performance in line with the views of our customers, our communities and our partners.

Our key priorities will cover education, the protection of vulnerable people, developing the economy, improving customer service, developing communities and protecting and enhancing the environment. In focusing on these priorities, we will offer Best Value services that are well matched to the needs of our customers. All of this however, will be done within the context of a tough economic climate – and one that will be shared by all public bodies in the coming years.

In financial year 2022/23 we continued to work to further enhance our partnerships in a more integrated way and involve our stakeholders to further improve the way we work and the services we deliver. We also continue to participate in Consortia Group meetings and Customer Service Excellence Benchmarking Group (CSE) meetings.

Argyll and Bute has a promising future and with common purpose and productive partnerships, that future will be challenging, satisfying and prosperous. We will maximise the potential of our employees, our Council, our partnerships, our communities and Argyll and Bute as a whole in order to develop a bright and sustainable future and we will work closely with the Scottish Government to contribute to their vision for a more successful Scotland.

Working together with customers, communities and partners, we look forward to creating a better place to live, work and visit.



Building Standards aims to deliver local outcomes that have been identified in the [Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement and which form part of the Council's strategic objectives contained within its Corporate Plan](#). The key outcomes for the service are derived from the following Corporate Objectives:-

| <u>Objectives</u> | <u>Outcomes</u> |
|---|--|
| Corporate Objective 2 – Working together to realise the potential of our communities | The places where we live, work and visit are well planned, safer and successful. |
| Corporate Objective 3 – Working together to realise the potential of our area | We contribute to a sustainable environment. We make the best use of our built and natural environment. |
| Corporate Objective 4 – Working together to realise the potential of our organisation | Our services are continually improving. Our employees have the skills and attitudes to deliver efficient and effective services. We provide good customer service. |

These outcomes are linked to the following [national outcomes](#):-

10. We live in well designed, sustainable places where people are able to access the amenities and services they need.
12. We value and enjoy our built and natural environment and protect it and enhance it for future generations.
14. We reduce the local and global environmental impact of our consumption and production.
15. Our public services are high quality, continually improving, efficient and responsive to local people's needs.

The success measure in our Service Plan for these outcomes is the health, safety, welfare and convenience of people in and around buildings is protected and improved.

This directly links to the new [Scottish Government Building Standards Key Performance Outcomes 1 - 9](#) which are imbedded in our Performance Management System (Pyramid) and which form the basis of our team plans and monitoring procedures.

In the coming year, the main issues that will require to be addressed are:-

- The new normal working arrangements and challenges faced by COVID 19.
- Pressures on Building Warrant fee income due to the economic downturn.
- The financial situation affecting local authorities will impact on future service delivery, including Building Standards. The Council are preparing its budget strategy to meet the savings targets for 22/23 and beyond with more detail expected in Quarter 3. Building warrant numbers and income levels are improving post pandemic but have not returned to pre-pandemic levels. This is a budget pressure for Building Standards. The service relies on income from commercialisation through vetting warrants for other local authorities and in 22/23 have secured a 3 month contract from Dundee City Council, to augment the existing work with East Lothian Council. This approach is unsustainable in the longer-term and work is ongoing to consider the Building Standards budget.
- Flexible retirement of staff and the potential for re-organisation of responsibilities and duties for existing staff, including our admin and technical support staff.
- Collection and analysis of additional data to permit the completion of the relevant sections of the web-based Performance Management framework.
- Continue to further develop processes and procedures in relation to National e-Building Standards Portal Submissions.
- Make preparations for annual re-assessment in respect of Customer Service Excellence.
- To continue to develop the Case Management System to record full details of dangerous and defective buildings and all notices issued.

BEST VALUE INITIATIVES RELATING TO BUILDING STANDARDS SERVICE DELIVERY IN ARGYLL AND BUTE

COMMITMENT AND LEADERSHIP

- Departmental Management Team (quarterly), Service Management Team (quarterly), Skype Meeting for all BS Staff (weekly), Skype Team Leader meeting (weekly), Building Standards Team Leader (quarterly), Building Standards (6 weekly) and Whole Team (bi-annual) meetings to discuss corporate, legislative and operational issues.
- Development and Infrastructure Services – Departmental Scorecard. The annual Departmental Scorecard outlines the objectives and priorities of the Development and Infrastructure Services Department (including Development and Economic Growth) and sets standards and targets against which performance can be measured.
- Development and Infrastructure Services – Individual Section Scorecards. The annual Section Scorecards outline the objectives and priorities of the individual sections and feed into the Departmental Scorecard. Following on from the success of Building Standards Scorecard since 2006 it has now been adopted departmental wide.
- Development and Economic Growth – Service Plan. The annual Service Plan outlines the objectives and priorities of the Development and Economic Growth (including Building Standards) and sets standards and targets against which performance can be measured.
- Development and Economic Growth – Work Plan. Each of the Service’s five units produces an annual work plan of key tasks to be delivered as measured against performance standards and key milestones.
- Development and Economic Growth Handbook – guidance and advice on Development and Economic Growth functions – what services we provide, contact details/frequently asked questions.
- Development Management, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Building Standards Charter Statements – what standards we aim to meet and what to do in the event we do not meet these standards.

RESPONSIVENESS AND CONSULTATION

- Customer/User Group Forums for Building Standards in partnership with Development Management and Development Policy.
- Building Standards Exit Questionnaires – issued with each Warrant approval and Completion acceptance.
- Online web based questionnaire and annual e-questionnaire to regular users.
- Building Standards e-Newsletters cascaded to all stakeholders.
- Formal process for Building Warrant pre-submission discussions including alternative solutions.
- Formal process for exempt works enquiries.
- Formal process for document searches/copy documents.
- Formal process for the “fast tracking” of applications of a minor nature.

SOUND GOVERNANCE AT A STRATEGIC, FINANCIAL AND OPERATIONAL LEVEL

- Building Standards Annual Performance Report is main driver and feeds into Departmental Scorecard, Service Plan/Work Plan
- Quarterly Reports including P.I.'s and scorecard progress displayed in area offices, online and published on 'Pyramid' the Council's Performance Management System all as part of the Council's Planning and Performance Management Framework (PPMF)
- Development and Economic Growth Revenue Budget – Annual Review/ Monthly Monitoring Reports
- Development Management, Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Building Standards Scorecard Reports published on 'Pyramid' – updated quarterly to advise on development and building standards performance and to set annual performance targets. “Uniform 9 Spatial” computer system utilized to register/process and monitor progress on planning and building warrant applications with information being transferred to 'Pyramid', the Council's performance management system, quarterly.

SOUND MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

- Development and Infrastructure Services – Identification and Assessment of Strategic and Operational Risks.
- Development and Economic Growth – Identification and Assessment of Strategic and Operational Risks.
- Performance Review and Development Process.
- Financial Procedures and control mechanisms.

USE OF REVIEW AND OPTIONS APPRAISAL

- Internal review of procedures for the recovery of costs for dangerous building demolitions by audit unit.
- Internal review of Development and Infrastructure Services administration function.
- Service Choices Process as a result of budgetary constraints.

COMPETITIVENESS, TRADING AND THE DISCHARGE OF AUTHORITY FUNCTIONS

- Council Scheme of Delegation and Standing Orders.
- a) Staff Advice Notes – administrative procedures, development and building standards procedures, enforcement procedures, informal monitoring of post responsibilities.
- b) Internal Network Drive – electronic resources library, copies of meeting agendas and minutes, published policy and view documents, guidance notes, general templates and forms.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- Argyll and Bute Sustainable Design Guide which seeks to secure sustainable communities through a sustainable approach to design.
- Argyll and Bute Sustainable Design Awards (judged by Building Standards, Development Management and Development Policy).

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES ARRANGEMENTS

- Race Equality Scheme –Audit of Planning Services.
- Equal Opportunity Training.
- Council’s Equality Action Plan – Equality questions added to Exit Questionnaire.
- Review of terminology, suffixes, etc. used in Building Standards public register in relation to Equality Act.

JOINT WORKING

- Building Standards Division of the Scottish Government.
- Local Authority Building Standards Scotland.
- Clyde Valley Benchmarking Group.
- Consortium Group 5.
- Local Access and Disability Forum.
- Scottish Fire and Rescue Service.
- Babcocks International Limited.
- Ministry of Defence Fire Service.
- Customer Service Excellence Benchmarking Group.
- Area Property Action Groups.
- City of Edinburgh Council.
- Moray Council.
- Scottish Borders Council.
- Falkirk Council.



- Inverclyde Council.
- East Lothian Council.
- East Dunbartonshire Council.
- Glasgow Caledonian University.
- Dundee City Council



ACCOUNTABILITY

- Council Corporate Reporting.
- BSD, Annual Performance Report and Continuous Improvement Plan are updated quarterly and annual peer Group Review.
- Quarterly Reports displayed in area offices, to Council, online and published via 'Pyramid', the Council's Performance Management System, in line with the Council's Planning and Performance Framework (PPMF).
- Development and Economic Growth Annual Public Performance Report.
- Fully implement Public Performance Reporting based on the Council's Planning and Performance Management Framework (PPMF) which will see quarterly updates of our Annual Performance Report used as the basis of reporting to the public.
- Customer Service Excellence Award – To retain our award is based on an annual audit process.



4.0 Key Performance Outcomes and Targets

The Verification Performance Report is a strategic planning and management tool that is used in business organisations to align business activities to the vision and strategy of the organisation, improve internal and external communications, and monitor performance against strategic goals.

Building Standards verifiers in Scotland are required to utilise the Verification Performance Report as a means to manage, monitor, review and develop strategies for their business with a focus on the three core perspectives listed below and the public interest and continuous improvement cross-cutting themes:

Professional Expertise & Technical

Processes.

Quality Customer Experience.

Operational & Financial Efficiency.

KPO1(a) - Time taken to issue a Building Warrant or Amendment to Warrant

| KPO1(A) - TIME TAKEN TO ISSUE A BUILDING WARRANT OR AMENDMENT TO WARRANT | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|--|------------------------------------|
| | CATEGORY (by building type and value of work) | Total number of BWs and amendments issued | Total number that utilised customer agreements | Total number of working days for total number of BWs and amendments issued | Average time per BW (Working Days) |
| DOMESTIC | 0 - £10,000 | 87 | 0 | 3218 | 36.99 |
| | £10,001 - £50,000 | 54 | 0 | 4025 | 74.54 |
| | £50,001 - £250,000 | 44 | 0 | 5864 | 133.27 |
| | £250,001 - £1,000,000 | 16 | 0 | 1967 | 122.94 |
| | £1,000,001 and above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0.00 |
| NON-DOMESTIC | 0 - £10,000 | 22 | 0 | 832 | 37.82 |
| | £10,001 - £50,000 | 16 | 0 | 1198 | 74.88 |
| | £50,001 - £250,000 | 8 | 0 | 725 | 90.63 |
| | £250,001 - £1,000,000 | 4 | 0 | 868 | 217.00 |
| | £1,000,001 and above | 2 | 0 | 133 | 66.50 |

KPO1(b) - Time taken to issue a first report (and building Warrant or Amendment when no first report)

| | CATEGORY (by building type and value of work) | Number of first reports issued | No. of first reports issued within 15 days | No. of first reports issued in more than 15 days and within 20 days | No. of first reports issued in more than 20 days and within 35 days | No. of first reports issued in more than 35 days |
|--------------|---|--------------------------------|--|---|---|--|
| DOMESTIC | 0 - £10,000 | 85 | 72 | 13 | 0 | 0 |
| | £10,001 - £50,000 | 48 | 38 | 10 | 0 | 0 |
| | £50,001 - £250,000 | 35 | 26 | 8 | 1 | 0 |
| | £250,001 - £1,000,000 | 24 | 18 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| | £1,000,001 and above | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| NON-DOMESTIC | 0 - £10,000 | 20 | 13 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| | £10,001 - £50,000 | 14 | 13 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | £50,001 - £250,000 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| | £250,001 - £1,000,000 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| | £1,000,001 and above | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

KPO1(c) - Time taken to issue a Building Warrant or Amendment to Building Warrant from receipt of satisfactory information (following a first report or subsequent report)

| | CATEGORY (by building type and value of work) | Total number of BWs and amendments issued | No. of BWs and amendments issued within 6 days of receipt of satisfactory information | No. of BWs and amendments issued in more than 6 days and within 10 days of receipt of satisfactory information | No. of BWs and amendments issued in more than 10 days and within 15 days of receipt of satisfactory information | No. of BWs and amendments issued in more than 15 days of receipt of satisfactory information |
|--------------|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| DOMESTIC | 0 - £10,000 | 56 | 56 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £10,001 - £50,000 | 45 | 42 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| | £50,001 - £250,000 | 44 | 43 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| | £250,001 - £1,000,000 | 16 | 15 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | £1,000,001 and above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| NON-DOMESTIC | 0 - £10,000 | 14 | 13 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | £10,001 - £50,000 | 16 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £50,001 - £250,000 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| | £250,001 - £1,000,000 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £1,000,001 and above | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

KPO2 - Increase quality of compliance assessment during the construction processes

| | CATEGORY (by building type and value of work) | Number of CCNPs for "accepted" completion certificates | Number of CCNPs fully achieved (by relevant person and verifier) | Number of CCNPs fully achieved by "Relevant Person" | Number of CCNPs fully achieved by "Verifier" |
|--------------|---|--|--|---|--|
| DOMESTIC | 0 - £10,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £10,001 - £50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £50,001 - £250,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £250,001 - £1,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £1,000,001 and above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| NON-DOMESTIC | 0 - £10,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £10,001 - £50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £50,001 - £250,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £250,001 - £1,000,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | £1,000,001 and above | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

KPO3 - Commit to the Building Standards Customer Charter

| KPO3 - COMMIT TO THE BUILDING STANDARDS CUSTOMER CHARTER | |
|--|---|
| Customer Charter published on verifier website | Published prominently |
| Customer Charter web address on verifier website | https://www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2023-05/building_standards_customer_service_charter_april_2023.pdf |
| Customer Charter reviewed since last reporting period | Yes |
| Number of cases referred to LABSS Dispute Resolution Process | 0 |
| Number of cases referred to LA Complaints formal procedure | 0 |
| Number of cases referred to SG Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers | 0 |
| Number of SG Verifier Performance Reporting Service cases responded to by verifier within 5 days | 0 |

KPO4 - Understand and respond to the customer experience

| KPO4 - UNDERSTAND AND RESPOND TO THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE | |
|---|---|
| Satisfaction rating from the last National Customer Survey | 8 |
| Details of any accredited customer service awards (for example Customer Service Excellence) | Building Standards retained the Customer Service Excellence Award (CSE) on the 9th May 2023 retaining full compliance on the 57 criterion. In addition we achieved a further one compliance pluses, now making a total of 24 compliance pluses, the most held within any section of our Council. Our own in-house customer satisfaction return shows us continuing to run at 100% |

KPO5 - Maintain financial governance

Currently our verification costs run at 87% of our total costs.

KPO6 - Commit to e-Building Standards

| KPO6 - COMMIT TO BUILDING STANDARDS | |
|---|---|
| eBS published on verifier website | Published prominently |
| eBS published weblink | https://www.ebuildingstandards.scot/eBuildingStandardsClient/default.aspx |
| Number of applications for building warrant or amendment submitted through SG eBS system | 211 |
| Number of completion certificates submitted through SG eBS system | 101 |
| Number of other forms submitted through SG eBS system | 80 |
| Building warrant or amendment process - plan checking done electronically | Yes |
| Building warrant or amendment process - building warrant or amendment issued electronically | Yes |
| Building warrant or amendment process - inspection done electronically | Yes |
| Building warrant or amendment process - completion certificate accepted electronically | Yes |

KPO7 - Commit to objectives outlined in the annual performance report

| KPO7 - COMMIT TO OBJECTIVES OUTLINED IN THE ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT | |
|---|---|
| Verifier Performance Report published on verifier website | Published prominently |
| Verifier Performance Report published weblink | https://www.ebuildingstandards.scot/eBuildingStandardsClient/default.aspx |
| Verifier Performance Report reviewed since last reporting period | Yes |
| Verifier Performance Report includes performance data | Includes all performance data |

5.0 Performance Data

Argyll and Bute Building Standards has a strong commitment to managing performance and this is clearly demonstrated with the publication of the Building Standards Annual Performance Report that is submitted annually to the Scottish Government and which forms the basis of our Service and team plans with regular audit and reviews. The link to the Single Outcome Agreement and Key Performance Outcomes contained in Pyramid (Argyll and Bute Council's performance management system) are also included within business objectives and monitored on a quarterly basis.

| Targets | 1.1 | 1.2 | 3.1 | 3.2 | 4.1 | 5.1 | 6.1 | 6.2 | 7.1 | 7.2 |
|--------------------------------|---|---|--|--|--|---|--|---|---|---|
| Argyll and Bute Council | 95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including BWs and amendments issued without a first report). | 90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report). | National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly) | 95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' case responded to by verifier within 5 days. | Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10 | Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%). | Details of eBuilding standards are published prominently on the verifier's website | 75% of each key building warrant related processes being done electronically (Plan checking; BWs and amendments (and plans) issue; Verification during construction; CC acceptance) | Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly) | Annual performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. April 2016 – March 2017) |
| 2022/23 Q4 | 98.36% | 99.56% | Published prominently (with review) | No cases referred to BSD 'reporting Service' | 8.0 | 97.64% | Published prominently | 4 of 4 done | Published prominently (with review) | Includes all performance data |
| 2023/24 Q1 | 99.15% | 100.00% | Published prominently (with review) | No cases referred to BSD 'reporting Service' | 8.0 | 190.62% | Published prominently | 4 of 4 done | Published prominently (with review) | Includes all performance data |
| 2023/24 Q2 | 99.60% | 99.12% | Published prominently (with review) | No cases referred to BSD 'reporting Service' | 8.0 | 99.27% | Published prominently | 4 of 4 done | Published prominently (with review) | Includes all performance data |
| 2023/24 Q3 | 99.17% | 98.02% | Published prominently (with review) | No cases referred to BSD 'reporting Service' | 8.0 | 95.28% | Published prominently | 4 of 4 done | Published prominently (with review) | Includes all performance data |

The Building Standards Service has consistently performed well, exceeding targets for performance over which it has control. This has been achieved despite a reduction in available budgets and a continued need for significant change instigated through the Scottish Government's [Building Standards Performance Improvement agenda](#) and through the Council's own Process for Change agenda.

The on-going economic downturn and consequential reduction in both private and public finance, with the situation being further exasperated by the BREXIT vote, is a further challenge the Service continues to face through the Council's Service Choices process, however the compelling need to retain a core of skilled and competent workforce with sufficient capability to embrace new working practices and increased workloads has been recognised.

The Building Standards Service has invested heavily in recent years, in its processes, systems and technical equipment in an effort to deliver greater efficiency, transparency, speed and consistency in decision making together with better outcomes on the ground. This investment continues with initiatives such as e-building standards, the creation of a virtual team, the introduction of agile and flexible working practices and the introduction of a comprehensive electronic document management system.

The Building Standards Service is also aware that the journey of improvement it has embarked on needs to continue as National KPO's were introduced in October 2012 and budget pressures intensify.

Taking a holistic approach to service delivery the Service remains fully committed to providing excellent customer service; retaining the Customer Service Excellence Award (CSE) on 9th May 2023 thus ensuring delivery of a high performance customer focused service as required by the Scottish Government and maximising value for money. This challenging standard assesses 57 different elements of customer service and is the only Government endorsed standard in the UK. To gain the standard the applicant team has to fully comply with at least 46 out of the 57 elements - Building Standards retained full compliance in the 57 criterion and in addition achieved a further one Compliance plus bringing our total to twenty four.

Building Standards aims to provide a customer focused service, meeting customer and stakeholder expectations identified through the use of user groups, the web, customer feedback forms and an annual customer satisfaction survey. This has allowed us to arrange tailored CPD events for both Local Authority Building Standards Surveyor and our regular Service User and Stakeholders. Complaints and other enquiries are recorded and analysed to ensure that service improvements can be made where appropriate.

During financial year 2022/23 Building Warrant applications (including Amendment of Building Warrants) totaling 1139 at an estimated value of £154 million were lodged with Argyll and Bute Council. This is approximately a 3% increase in applications received in 2021/22 and a 47% increase in the value of works.



Service Improvements and Partnership Working – further information can be viewed on our [Service Improvement Log](#)

In the previous 12 months 22/23 we did:-

| Number | Continuous Improvement Action | Status (Complete - On-going – Not Started)_ |
|--------|---|---|
| 1 | Retained our Customer Service Excellence Accreditation with an increased score | Complete |
| 2 | Use of Commercialisation to supplement verification fees income | Complete |
| 3 | Annual interrogation of Quarterly KPO stats to identify and engage with agents who consistently delay re-submission data | Complete |
| 4 | Continue internal staff training i.e. customer care, equality and diversity, GDPR. | Complete |
| 5 | Produce and publicise on our website a new document 'Do I need a Building Warrant' | Completed |
| 6 | Create new template to advise business premises with temporary facilities that Building Warrant will be required as of March 2022. | Completed |
| 7 | Introduction of new process to assist stakeholders in submission of multiple PDF application documents taking heed of Pye Tait Report findings. | Completed |
| 8 | Inclusion of development site address in all correspondence to applicant/agents | Completed |



In the next 12 months 23/24 we will do:-

| Number | Continuous Improvement Action | Status (Complete - On-going – Not Started) |
|--------|--|--|
| 1 | Continue to develop Notices Module in Uniform and Civica | On-going |
| 2 | Continue to commercialise to assist budgetary position | On-going |
| 3 | Continue to look to future proof our service by the recruitment of apprentices/graduates | On-going |
| 4 | Annual interrogation of Quarterly KPO stats to identify and engage with agents who consistently delay re-submission data | On-going |
| 5 | Prepare for our next Customer Service Excellence Audit due May 23 | Completed |
| 6 | Purchase and develop Uniform Enterprise Module to ultimately replace our workflow processes within Civica. | On-going |
| 7 | Continue internal staff training i.e. customer care, equality and diversity, GDPR. | On-going |
| 8 | The Technical Innovation Working Group looking at alternative methods of working. | On-going |
| 9 | Continue to carry out virtual inspections known as Remote Verification Inspections (RVI) | On-going |
| 10 | The Technical Innovation Working Group are looking at production of digital/interactive documents | On-going |
| 11 | Prepare to move from Civica Document Management System to IDOX Electronic Document Management System. | On-going |
| 12 | Re-instate User Forums via Microsoft Teams | Completed |
| 13 | Issue 2 Newsletters per year | On-going |

| | | |
|----|---|-----------|
| 14 | Inclusion of URL for National Customer Survey added to emails/templates/website/social media channels accordingly | Completed |
| 15 | Creation and production of templates advising owners where not the applicant of when the Warrant and Completion Certificate have been issued | Completed |
| 16 | Creation and production of a Standard letter template for Section 48 compliance in relation to SFRS | Completed |
| 17 | Included in Dec newsletter advise on regulatory updates in relation to Section 6 of the Technical Handbooks in regard to changes post February 2023 | Completed |
| 18 | Updated internal procedures/documents in relation to internal audit assessment Jan - March 2023 | Completed |
| 19 | Update Building Warrant Registration Process October 2023 | Completed |
| 20 | To interrogate with a view to installing Near Me Software to assist with Remote Virtual Inspections | On-going |



6.0 Additional Data

Verifiers provide returns to the Scottish Government on their verification performance and workload. The performance data relates to the building standards verification performance framework and the workload data relates to the numbers of Building Warrant applications; completion certificates; fees; costs; certificates (structural certification, energy performance; sustainability); enforcement cases.

| OVERVIEW TOTALS OF BWs, CCs, CERTIFICATION AND ENFORCEMENT | | |
|--|--|-----|
| Building Warrants | | |
| applications | Total no. of all BW applications (including "late" applications) | 168 |
| applications | "Late" BW applications (as included above) | 0 |
| applications | "Staged" BW applications (as included above) | 2 |
| decisions | No. of BW approved | 165 |
| decisions | No. of BW refused | 2 |
| amendments - applications | No. of amendment to BW applications | 89 |
| amendments - applications | Amendments to "staged" BW applications (as included above) | 3 |
| BW amendments - decisions | No. of amendment to BW applications approved | 89 |
| BW amendments - decisions | No. of amendment to BW applications refused | 0 |
| Comments | None | |
| Completion Certificates | | |
| submissions | Total no. of CC submissions (including CCs where no BW was obtained) | 137 |
| submissions | Total no. of CC submissions where no BW was obtained (as included above) | 1 |
| decisions | No. of CC accepted | 129 |
| decisions | No. of BW rejected | 8 |
| Comments | None | |
| Certification | | |
| Design scheme (building structures) | No. of certificates of design provided | 93 |
| Design scheme (energy - domestic) | No. of certificates of design provided | 0 |
| Design scheme (energy - non-domestic) | No. of certificates of design provided | 0 |
| Construction scheme (electrical installations) | No. of certificates of construction provided | 1 |
| Construction scheme (drainage, heating and plumbing) | No. of certificates of construction provided | 0 |
| Comments | None | |
| Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs) | | |
| Domestic | No. of copy certificates received | 16 |
| Non-domestic | No. of copy certificates received | 1 |
| Comments | None | |
| Statements of Sustainability | | |
| Domestic - Bronze | No. of copy certificates received | 1 |
| Domestic - Bronze Active | No. of copy certificates received | 19 |
| Domestic - Silver | No. of copy certificates received | 0 |
| Domestic - Silver Active | No. of copy certificates received | 0 |
| Domestic - Gold | No. of copy certificates received | 0 |
| Non-domestic - Bronze | No. of copy certificates received | 0 |
| Non-domestic - Bronze Active | No. of copy certificates received | 0 |
| Non-domestic - Silver | No. of copy certificates received | 0 |
| Non-domestic - Silver Active | No. of copy certificates received | 0 |
| Non-domestic - Gold | No. of copy certificates received | 0 |
| Comments | None | |
| Fire Safety Design Summaries | | |
| Non-domestic | No. of summaries received | 3 |
| Comments | None | |
| Enforcement | | |
| Section 25 - compliance | No. of notices served | 0 |
| Section 26 - continuing requirement | No. of notices served | 0 |
| Section 27 - enforcement | No. of notices served | 1 |
| Section 28 - defective building | No. of notices served | 0 |
| Section 29 - dangerous building emergency action | How many instances LA has taken action | 1 |
| Section 30 - dangerous building | No. of notices served | 1 |
| Procurator fiscal | No. of enforcement cases referred | 0 |
| Local authority undertaking work (in default) | No. of cases where local authority have undertaken work | 2 |

