

Argyll and Bute Council

Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

Building Standards Do I need a building warrant?



CUSTOMER
SERVICE
EXCELLENCE



Argyll and Bute Council
Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid
argyll-bute.gov.uk



This guidance document is purely for domestic purposes only and is not relevant to any commercial or other non-domestic situations. If in doubt, please ask your local building standards area team for further advice or call 01546-605518.

Table of contents:

Description:	Page no:
Domestic works that require Building Warrant consent	3
General Guidance on exempt works	4
Definitions	4
Detached buildings within the curtilage (in the garden area) of a dwelling	5
Buildings attached to a house	6
Works to or in a flat or maisonette	7
Internal alterations to a dwelling house (up to 2 storey)	7
Installation of solar thermal or Photovoltaic Panels	8
Other general works not requiring a building warrant	9
Fire and smoke detection in a domestic dwelling	9
List of Building Standards contacts	10

Works that will require Building Warrant approval.

Please note that this list is purely for illustration purposes and is in no way definitive. If in doubt contact your local area Building Standards team on 01546-605518. [How to make a building warrant application.](#)

Please be aware that the rules in relation to planning consent differ from building standards and it is advised that you contact [planning](#) to discuss any proposals via the hyperlink or on 01546-605518.

1. The conversion of your existing garage into a room
2. Renewing your existing conservatory roof and replacing it with a solid roof i.e. not like for like.
3. Installing a door or window into an external wall of the house (This is not a straight replacement of an existing door or window)
4. Increasing or reducing the opening size of a door or window opening in an external wall
5. The conversion of an attic/loft space into a room or rooms
6. The conversion of an attic space into storage room (altering roof timbers, altering loft hatch)
7. Installing a roof light where you will be altering the roof timbers/trusses
8. Altering/removing loadbearing internal walls (Please note this can be timber construction as well as masonry)
9. Forming a door opening between your house and attached garage
The installation of external wall insulation (EWI) to your property.



Works that are exempt from requiring a building warrant.

General Guidance on Exemptions?

It is important that you read this guidance carefully. The technical standards and the terminology used can be rather complex. Particular attention is drawn to **definitions** which are clarified in detail below:

You can read the full lists of exemptions which are contained in Schedule 1 and Schedule 3 which are within [Section 0 General Technical Handbook](#).

(Please remember the rules relating to planning approval differ from building standards so please don't assume planning consent is not required).

Definitions:

Carport

Means a roofed building for vehicle storage which is open on at least two sides except for roof supports.

Conservatory

A building attached to and having an entrance from the house, which is thermally divided* from the house, which either has at least 75% of its roof and 50% its external walls made of glass or other translucent material or at least 95% of its roof and 35% of its wall area made of glass or other translucent material.

*Thermal division requires exterior grade windows/doors having the appropriate thermal u-value.

Covered area

A roofed building, open on at least 2 sides, except for any roof supports

Greenhouse

A building used mainly for growing plants, which is either detached from the house or attached, but **not** entered from the house

House

In this part means either a detached, semi or terraced dwelling, not a flat or a maisonette

Porch

A building attached to and providing a covered entrance to a house

Flat

Means a dwelling on one storey forming part of a building from some other part of which it is divided horizontally

Maisonette

Means a dwelling on more than one storey, forming part of a building from some other part of which it is divided horizontally.

Detached buildings within the curtilage (garden ground) of a house.

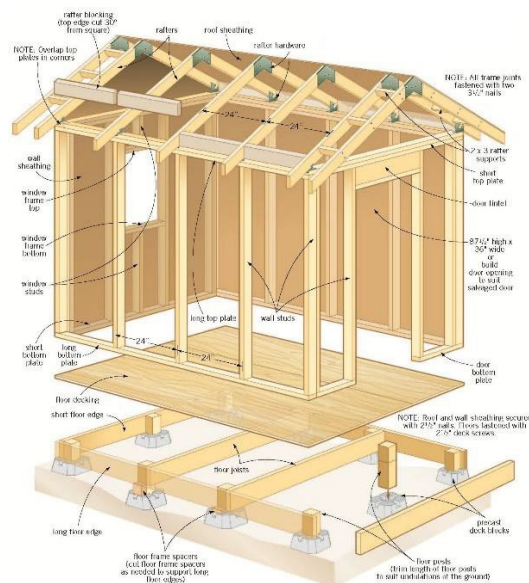
If you propose to build any of the following **single storey** buildings, within the curtilage of your house, you will **not, subject to the specified conditions**, require a building warrant. Separate rules apply if you stay in a flat, (see heading below)

1. [Garage](#)
2. Garden hut or store
3. Building used for keeping animals, birds or other livestock for domestic purposes
4. [Carport](#) or a covered area
5. Greenhouse
6. Summerhouse
7. The installation of external wall insulation (EWI) to the property.

Specified Conditions

The following conditions apply to both the attached buildings listed above.

1. In the case of detached buildings 1,2 and 3 above, the proposed building must be at least one metre from the boundary unless it is located more than one metre from the house.
2. The area of the proposed building must not exceed 30m² or in the case of a porch and conservatory 8m²
3. The proposed building must not contain a flue or a combustion appliance i.e. a stove, boiler, etc.
4. The proposed building must not contain sanitary accommodation i.e. bathroom, shower-room, wc, etc.
5. In the case of a porch or a conservatory, it must be at least one metre from the boundary
6. If the building is over 8m², it must be constructed to comply with the building regulations
7. Please note that any building (attached or detached) that exceeds 8m² in area will not require a building warrant as long as the building meets the minimum requirements of the Domestic Technical Handbook. It is advisable to check with building standards in relation to the installation of a summerhouse/garage or other building as there are various technical standards that determine whether the building complies or not with the regulations i.e. boundary distance, fire resistance, drainage, u-values etc. [If in doubt ask.](#)





Buildings attached to a house (not a flat or maisonette)

If you propose to build any of the following **single storey** buildings attached to your house, you will **not, subject to the specified conditions**, require a building warrant.

1. Small conservatory (Not exceeding 8m²)
2. Small porch (Not exceeding 8m²)
3. Greenhouse (not exceeding 30m²)
4. Carport or a covered area (Not exceeding 30m²)

Specified Conditions

The following conditions apply to both the detached and attached buildings listed above.

1. A greenhouse must only be accessed externally (No door between dwelling and greenhouse)
2. The proposed building must not contain a flue or a combustion appliance i.e. a stove, boiler, etc.
3. The proposed building must not contain sanitary accommodation i.e. bathroom, shower-room, wc, etc.
4. In the case of a porch or a conservatory, it must be at least one metre from the boundary
5. If the building is over 8m², it must be constructed to comply with the building regulations

Detached buildings within the curtilage (garden ground) of a flat or maisonette.

If you propose to build any single storey building, next to a flat or maisonette, you will not, subject to the following specified conditions, require a building warrant.

1. The building must not have an area of more than 30m²
2. The building must be at least 3m from the flat or maisonette or any other part of the building containing the flat or maisonette
3. The proposed building must not contain a flue or a combustion appliance i.e. a stove, boiler, etc.
4. The proposed building must not contain sanitary accommodation i.e. bathroom, shower-room, wc, etc.
5. If the building is in excess of 8m², it must be constructed to comply with the building regulations

Internal alterations to houses

A building warrant is not required for alterations within a house (not a flat or maisonette) subject to the following conditions:

1. The floor area of the house is not increased (extension)
2. There must be no alteration to an external wall, a separating wall, a loadbearing wall, the roof or any other element of structure
3. The house being altered must have no more than 2 storeys.

Note, many timber framed walls are in fact loadbearing. If unsure, please seek advice from a suitably qualified construction professional such as a chartered building surveyor or structural engineer etc.

Internal alterations to flats and maisonettes

No exemptions apply to flats and maisonettes. A [building warrant](#) is required in **all** instances.

Installation of solar thermal or Photovoltaic Panels

A building warrant is not required for the installation of solar or PV panels on the roof of a single or two storey house, provided that the existing roof structure is capable of taking the additional loading. If, however the roof structure does require strengthening then a building warrant is required.



Other general works not requiring a building warrant

You do not require a building warrant to carry out the following:

- A wall - provided it is not more than 1.2 metres in height.
- A fence - provided it is not greater than 2 metres in height.
- General repair work to replace, by material of the same general type, defective render, cladding linings or coverings or involving the replacement of a fixture or appliance, by another of the same general type.
- Work external to, but immediately adjoining the house* (e.g. patio, decking, steps or ramp up to 5m in length).
- Small penetrations through the external walls or roof (e.g. [balanced flue](#) from a boiler, sanitary pipework, mechanical extract ducts or pipe vents)*
- Small attachments to the external walls (eg, canopies, micro-renewables)
- Erection, demolition or alteration of non-loadbearing partitions
- [Electrical work](#) to a single or two storey dwelling including [fire detection](#).*
- [An en-suite bathroom or shower room](#) (including associated drainage)*
- [A central heating system](#)*

*Decking positioned more than 1.2m above the ground requires a building warrant.

*Please click on the highlighted text for further guidance.

*Building Warrant is required for a mains operated fire alarm system in a flat or 3 storey house.



Other Useful links:

[Making a quality building warrant application: what you need to know](#)

[Building Standards pages on Argyll Bute Council website](#)

[Contact Building Standards](#)

[Planning pages on Argyll and Bute Council website](#)

[Electronic Building Standards website/application forms](#)

[Domestic Technical Handbook – Section 0](#)

[Definitions](#)

[Guidance on Combustion appliances and associated work not requiring a warrant](#)

[Guidance on Electrical work not requiring a warrant](#)

[Scottish Government – Fire and smoke alarms: changes to the law](#)

[Guidance on Plumbing installation work not requiring a warrant](#)

[Building Standards technical handbook 2026: Domestic](#)

[LABSS Guidance document – Building Standards “A Householders Guide”](#)

CONTACT DETAILS:

BUTE AND COWAL

Argyll House 91 Alexandra Parade, DUNOON PA23 8AJ
Email: buildingstandards.bandc@argyll-bute.gov.uk

HELENSBURGH AND LOMOND

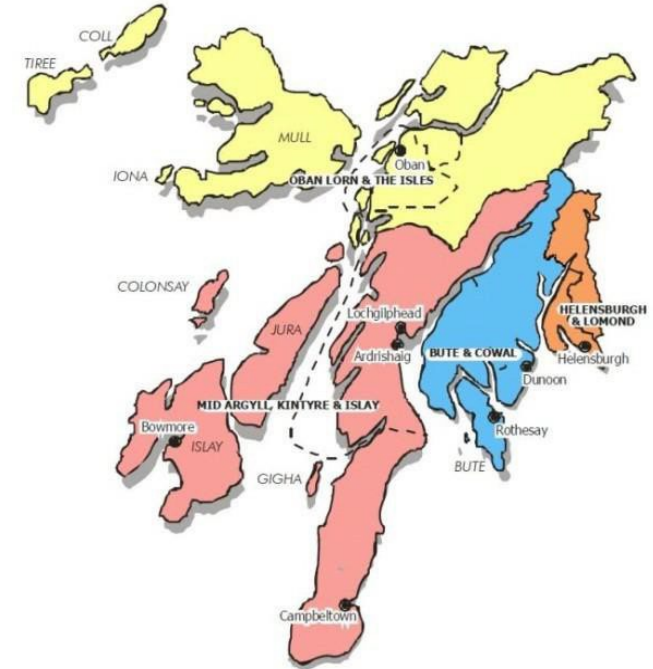
The Helensburgh and Lomond Civic Centre, 38 East Clyde Street, Helensburgh, G84 7PG
Email: buildingstandards.handl@argyll-bute.gov.uk

MID ARGYLL, KINTYRE AND ISLAY

1A Manse Brae, Lochgilphead, PA31 8RD
Email: buildingstandards.maki@argyll-bute.gov.uk

OBAN, LORN AND THE ISLES

Municipal Buildings, Albany Street, Oban, PA34 4AW
Email: buildingstandards.olandi@argyll-bute.gov.uk



**To contact Building Standards by telephone:
call the Customer Service Centre on 01546 605518**

All maps are reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office (c) Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
Argyll and Bute Council, License Number 100023368, 2006.



Argyll and Bute Council
Comhairle Earra-Ghàidheal agus Bhòid

