

# Building Standards Newsletter

December 2012



2012 has again been a challenging year for Building Standards in Argyll & Bute. As well as processing Building Warrants and Completion Certificates and dealing with an ever increasing amount of dangerous building work, we have been actively involved with the Building Standards Division of the Scottish Government to implement the new national performance framework.

This new performance framework for Building Standards allows the performance of all Local Authority Verifiers to be monitored in a consistent manner. The process of reporting performance begins in January 2013 for any Building Warrant application received on or after 1 October 2012.

In all, 9 new Key Performance Outcomes (KPO's) are being phased in;

- A year-on-year reduction in the average time taken to grant a Building Warrant. This records the overall time taken for warrant to be approved, including the time taken by agents to respond to observations letters. We will be reporting the time taken by agents and by us.
- A new national performance standard for initial assessment of an application within 20 working days.
- The Verifier will require to agree with an applicant if a longer period is required (say for a major development). If timescales are not met, applicants may require the verifier to provide an "escape route" if unacceptable delays occur in warrant assessment
- Construction Compliance Notification Plans (CCNP's) will be issued with all Building Warrants. The plans will specify stages of construction when Building Standards are to be notified to undertake an inspection.
- It will be the applicant's responsibility to contact Building Standards to arrange an inspection.
- We will be recording where an applicant fails to adhere to the CCNP and it will be likely that in these cases Completion Certificates will not be accepted and a possible disruptive survey may be carried out at the owner's expense.
- We will be recording the most common aspects of non-compliance found on site.
- It is hoped that this framework will promote consistency and quality of compliance, as well as a better understanding of the roles of the applicant or "relevant person".
- A national customer charter will complement the local charter and will demonstrate a shared commitment to service levels and a consistent standard of quality across all local authorities.
- A national survey will be carried out and the findings used to improve the customer experience.
- The Building Warrant income is to be compared with the cost of running the service.
- A national construction forum to be formed to bring together key stakeholders in the construction

**If there is sufficient interest we would look to run a further briefing session on Construction Compliance Notification Plans in the Spring of 2013 by which time any teething problems will have been identified. If this would be of interest please let us know.**

 **Seasons Greetings**

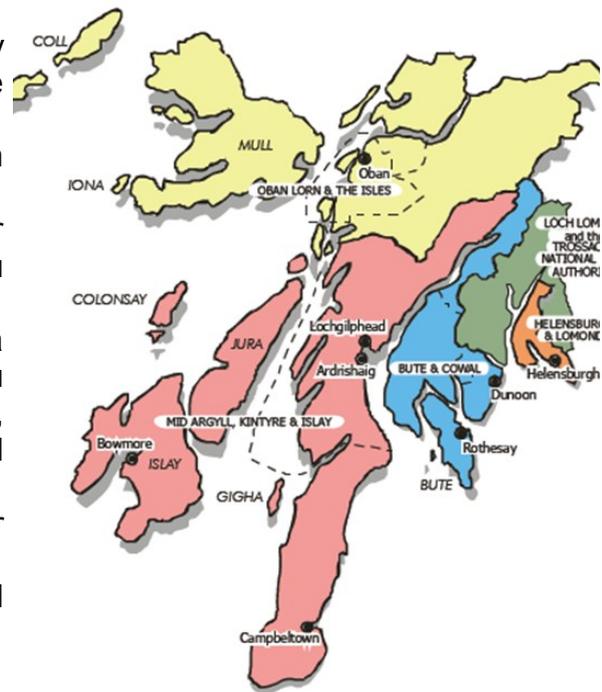
Martin Matheson and all his team at Building Standards wish our regular users a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Argyll & Bute Council Building Standards Performance Statistics	July - Sept 12	
	target	Actual
The percentage of requests for a Building Warrant responded to within 20 days.	80%	96.8%
The average time taken to respond to a request for a completion certificate.	3 days	2.2 days
The percentage of building warrants issued (or otherwise determined) within six days.	80%	92.1%
The percentage of completion certificates issued/ accepted (or otherwise determined) within three days.	80%	95.0%

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## Did You Know?

- If you provide your e-mail address, we will e-mail any correspondence to speed up the process. Please ensure the e-mail address you provide is current and spelled correctly.
- Only the applicant or the agent can fill in the completion certificate, not the builder!
- If you provide a Certificate of Design along with your application form, the fee is reduced by 10%. Please ensure you submit the correct fee!
- If you state on your application form that you will submit a Certificate of Construction, you will get a fee reduction. You must submit the correct certificate on completion. If you don't, we won't accept your completion until we receive the additional fee.
- If you do not provide all the information needed to approve your warrant after 3 months, we may refuse it.
- A completion certificate will only be considered for a valid warrant.

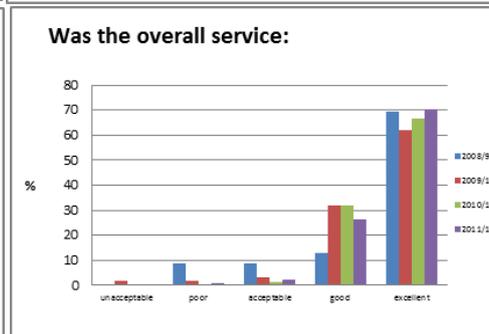
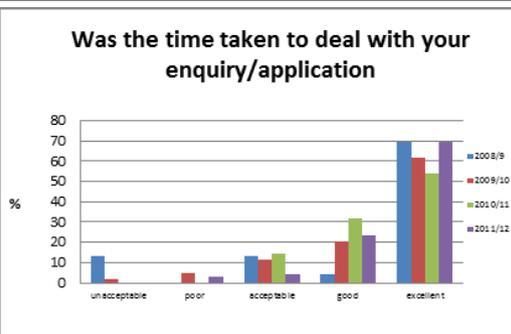
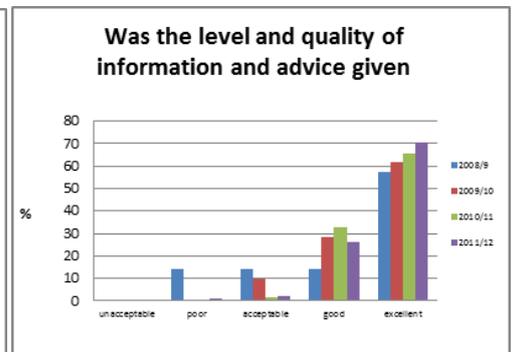
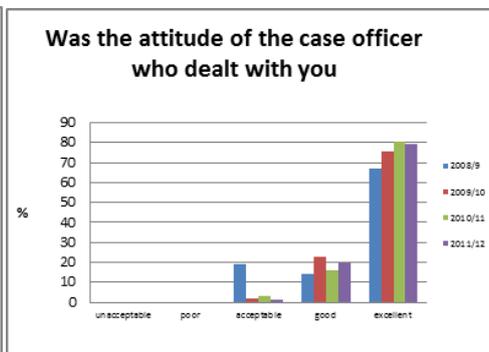
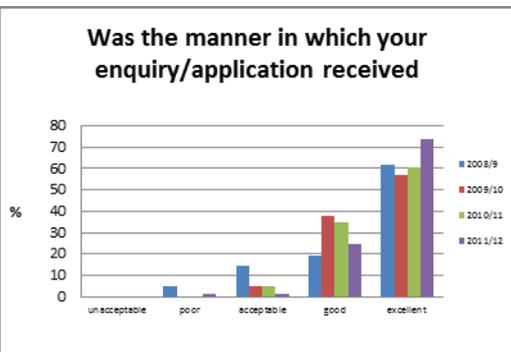


For more information, please see our [website](#).

## Customer Satisfaction

During 2011/12 Building Standards adopted a variety of measures to enable it to gauge customer satisfaction including the issuing of Pre-Paid Customer Service Questionnaires with each Building Warrant approval and Completion Certificate Acceptance, the holding of User Forums and the issuing of an e-mailed and posted Annual Customer Satisfaction form to our regular users in December 2011.

It is gratifying to note that our customers who did respond have rated our overall service as **good or excellent**.



This year to allow me to measure our customer satisfaction I would be grateful if you could spend a few minutes by completing our [customer satisfaction survey](#) which is now available online.

## e-building Standards

Progress: The business case has been accepted by the Council, the IT hardware and software have been procured, selected Building Standards application forms are being e-readied and updated process/protocols are being implemented. It is anticipated that a trial will commence in the early part of 2013 in the Helensburgh and Lomond area. On completion of the trial this will then be rolled out to the other 3 area offices.

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