



2013 has again been a busy year for Building Standards in Argyll and 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 implementing the national performance framework.

We have also successfully gone through the Customer Service excellence process. We are aware however that we are only as good as our last customer comment received and welcome any suggestions you have which will enhance our service further. Suggestions can be made [online](#) or by completing a form available from our area offices.

### Customer Service Excellence Award

Building Standards Service have successfully completed the assessment to be awarded the Customer Service Excellence Standard. This is the UK government's official standard for customer service and culminated in a rigorous two day assessment by an independent assessor.

Providing verbal feedback after the assessment the independent assessor noted that Building Standards had met 54 out of the 57 criteria of the standard (pass mark is 46 out of 57) and he said that such a high score for a first time applicant to the standard was "quite exceptional". As a result Building Standards are now able to use the CSE logo as a visible sign of their achievement; the first service in the council to attain this award.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all our regular service users, especially those of you who attended our stakeholder event to meet with the auditor to provide much needed support. It must be recognised that without your support and involvement in the process we would not have been successful.

### Quarterly Statistics

Argyll & Bute Council Building Standards Performance Statistics	July - Sept13	
	target	Actual
The percentage of requests for a building warrant responded to within 20 days.	80%	96.3%
The average time taken to respond to a request for a completion certificate.	3 days	1.5 days
The percentage of building warrants issued (or otherwise determined) within six days.	80%	94%
The percentage of completion certificates issued/ accepted (or otherwise determined) within three days.	80%	99.6%
The percentage of applicants providing feedback that were either satisfied or very satisfied with our service.	84%	93.8%

### New Initiatives

We would like to remind you that we now have an [express building warrant assessment service for minor works](#) and we would also like to remind you of the pre-warrant enquiry/discussion service offered for major works. Please contact the nearest area office to the location of the project for further details.

### Guidance

Our Customer Service Charter and our Guidance Notes have been updated. The Customer Service Charter and several of our Guidance Notes are also available in Gaelic. These updated documents are available in hard copy from local area offices or alternatively [online](#). Feedback on these documents would be very welcome.

### The 2013 Edition of the Technical Handbooks.

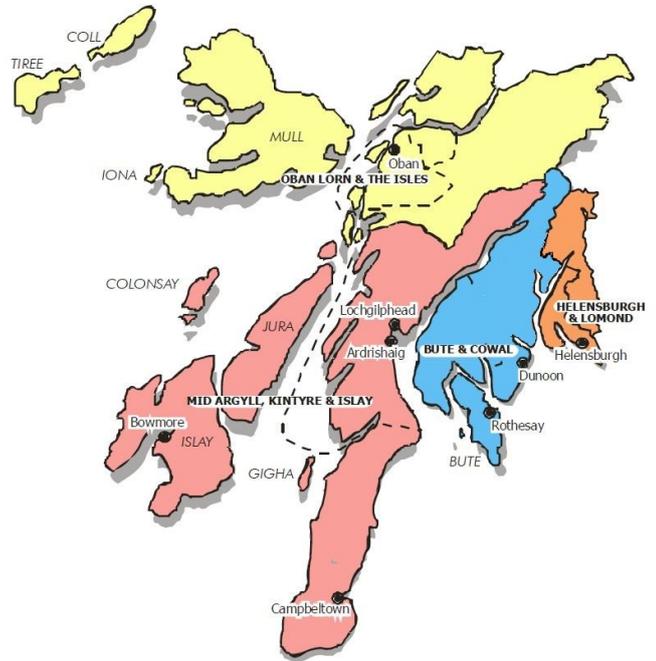
**Please remember that the handbooks are available, free of charge, in electronic format only.** They can be viewed or downloaded from the BSD website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards>.



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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, legible 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.



## Compliance

- Construction Compliance and Notification Plans (CCNP's) are now issued with all Building Warrants. The plans specify stages of construction when Building Standards are to be notified to undertake an inspection.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to contact Building Standards to arrange an inspection.
- We record where an applicant fails to adhere to the CCNP
- We record the most common aspects of non-compliance found on site.
- We report quarterly to the BSD on the number of CCNPs completed
- To date, in a lot of cases, Building Standards are still not being notified that works have commenced on site. As a result CCNPs are not being completed.
- **Please ensure that if you are handing over the project to the applicant at approval stage they are made aware of the roles of the applicant or "relevant person".**

## Customer Satisfaction

The views of our regular users are very important and assist us in focusing our service delivery. I would be grateful therefore if you could spend a few minutes completing our [on-line customer satisfaction survey](#).



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

## e-Building Standards Update

Progress: The development of the I.T system and electronic forms have taken longer than we had originally envisaged, however I.T have confirmed that the system should now be fully operational. Our trial from the Helensburgh office which had stalled will now recommence. The plan is still that all Building Warrant applications, and associated amendments with a value of £40,000 or less, including the Completion Certificate submission will be handled as an electronic submission irrespective of which area office the application was lodged in and whether or not it was made in paper form or by electronic means.

To date we have enlisted nine 'volunteer agents' willing to trial the system in partnership with us. Additional participants will be welcome. Please [email me](#) for further details.

It is now envisaged that the trial will be extended until at least March 2014 with the system then being rolled out across all area Building Standards offices in the New year.

## CPD Certificates

Following our recent User Forums should you wish a CPD certificate for attending the 1hour Technical Handbook Update session please [email me](#) and I will arrange for one to be sent out in the new year.

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