

Welcome to another edition of our Newsletter- Keeping you informed of any changes in Building Standards

December 2017

Building Standards Newsletter



Scottish Governments eBuilding Standards Portal.

Since the launch of eBuilding Standards National Portal on 24th August 2016, the number of submissions made via the portal has continued to rise.

Argyll and Bute Council continue to work with our customers to further streamline processes and procedures offering additional support either on-site or by telephone consultation and if you would like to take advantage of this service then please email beth.connelly@argyll-bute.gov.uk who will then contact you direct to arrange suitable dates/times to discuss your requirements. In addition if you wish to provide us with further suggestions as to how the eBuilding Standards Portal could be improved then please forward the details of these suggestions to beth.connelly@argyll-bute.gov.uk

The Scottish Government held an All Partner Event, in Edinburgh, on the 12th December 2017 which we attended. The morning session consisted of a combination of presentations and discussion, with the afternoon session focusing on the Local Authority User Group, during which recorded issues relating to the three aspects of the eDevelopment Portal; Connector, Forms and Payments were discussed. The Authorities then provided their thoughts on which of the issues relating to the above should be considered priority issues, explored further and taken forward in the coming year.

Update from BSD

As a result of the recent Grenfell Tower Block fire and the structural issues found primarily, but not exclusively, in new build Edinburgh Schools, the Scottish Government has set up two review groups. Professor John Cose will chair the review of enforcement and compliance and Dr Paul Stollard will chair the review of fire safety in Building Standards.

It is likely that there will be recommendations made by these two groups that will impact on the current technical standards.

Our best guesstimate would be that following a public consultation changes could be implemented as early as the Autumn 2018 but more likely in the spring of 2019.

Financial Position

Value of Building work in Argyll and Bute is still low with Building Warrant application numbers and fees received still depressed. Argyll and Bute council require to save between £11m and £34m between 2018-21. Service Choices has left Building Standards untouched at this minute, with no savings to be made, however we have been tasked with generating a balanced budget + 5% every year for the next three year period which we hope to achieve through commercialisation.

Realising our potential together

For more information, please see our website, www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/building-standards or call our Customer Service Centre on 01546 605518. If you have any comments on how to improve our service to you, please complete our Service Improvement Suggestion form available on our Performance and Customer Care webpage or in the leaflet stands in your local area office.

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE



Through regular checking of our performance we will ensure that any commercialisation will not impact on the service we provide as 'Verifier' for the Argyll and Bute Council area.

National Customer Survey

The fourth annual customer survey results have now been published and the report can be accessed [online](#). Many thanks for those of our service users who participated. This year (see below) Argyll & Bute Building Standards attained an overall customer satisfaction score of 8.1 against a national average of 6.7.

Although slightly down on last year's 'score' of 8.4 this is still a very respectful outcome overall and is one of the best results in the country.

As a way of improving we would welcome comments from yourselves for the possible reasons in the sections of service provision where we may have performed slightly poorer than last year.

Table 4 Main results and comparisons

Measures	Scotland 2017	Argyll & Bute 2017	Argyll & Bute 2016	Argyll & Bute 2015
OVERALL SATISFACTION				
Overall satisfaction with the service received (out of 10)	6.7	8.1	8.4	8.1
MEETING EXPECTATIONS				
Extent to which the service met expectations (out of 10)	6.7	8.1	8.5	8.1
Very/fairly satisfied with the timeliness of various aspects of the service	53%	72%	79%	74%
Kept very/fairly well informed about the progress of an application or submission	51%	77%	83%	73%
QUALITY OF SERVICE				
Strongly agree/agree to some extent that sufficient advice and guidance was received to meet needs	63%	92%	84%	86%
Strongly agree/agree to some extent that Building Standards service staff were polite and courteous	81%	100%	93%	89%
Yes – an inspection visit was undertaken by Building Standards staff	63%	60%	61%	67%
Very/fairly satisfied with the quality of the advice and guidance received from inspection staff	78%	81%	92%	82%
Yes – aware of the need to notify the Building Standards service prior to commencing work	98%	97%	99%	95%
COMMUNICATIONS				
Satisfied with the <u>accuracy</u> of written information (out of 10)	7.9	8.9	8.8	8.3
Satisfied with the <u>quality</u> of written information (out of 10)	7.7	8.8	8.7	8.3
ACCESSIBILITY				
Building Standards service staff are accessible if I want to meet them in person	57%	72%	77%	82%
Building Standards service staff are approachable	70%	88%	91%	89%
Very/fairly satisfied with the reception service	82%	83%	88%	91%

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Customer Service Excellence (CSE)

Our fourth year of rolling audit took place on 22nd November 2017 and due in no small part to our regular users comments made to the assessor, either in person or by telephone, we have once again successfully retained full compliance on the 57 criterion. In addition we received a further 5 compliance pluses, now making a total of 12 compliance pluses, the most held in any section or service within the Council, as a result the team and myself would like to thank all our service users for their continued support.

User Forums

Attendance at this year's joint User Forums was less than we would have liked, although those that attended were happy with the informal format. The Oban forum was well attended, with a small number of agents attending the Lochgilphead, Dunoon and Helensburgh forums.

If there is anything we could do to encourage more of you to attend, e.g. continue with the Forums as they are or send regular updates via email and only have events where there is something of significance to inform our regular users with, I'd be grateful if you could e-mail the information to myself at martin.matheson@argyll-bute.gov.uk

Customer Satisfaction

Argyll and Bute Council Building Standards will continue to seek your views on our local service, the views of our regular users are very important to us and assist in focusing our service delivery, we would be grateful therefore if you could spend a few minutes completing our [on-line customer satisfaction survey](#).



All the team at Building Standards wish our regular users a
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

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