

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

December 2018

# Building Standards Newsletter

eBuilding Standards.scot



## **Scottish Governments eBuilding Standards Portal.**

Submissions of applications via the Scottish Government Portal, have continued to increase steadily since its launch in August 2016.

However one of the major issues, that is the ability to stamp plans electronically, and the promise of a national solution by the Scottish Government has failed to materialise, so in order to continue to provide our customers with a high standard of service, Building Standards has been discussing an alternative solution to electronically stamp plans with our colleagues in West Dunbartonshire Council.

Building Standards are now currently testing this alternative solution in our test environment and it is our intention, when testing is complete, to invite a few of our agents to trial this facility.

If the trial is successful then this will be rolled out to all electronic submissions.

A further payment option to allow 'client to pay later' has been added to the eDevelopment portal however the option to make payment by BACS is still not available and we are aware that for a number of our agents this would be their preferred option.

As a result Building Standards have made the decision to accept a copy of the remittance advice as proof of payment which would result in the application being considered valid on receipt. If you would like to proceed in this way then please ensure that a copy of the remittance advice is emailed to [bsonlinesubmission@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:bsonlinesubmission@argyll-bute.gov.uk) at the same time as the submission of the application is made.

Argyll and Bute Council's Bank Account Details can be requested direct to [beth.connelly@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:beth.connelly@argyll-bute.gov.uk) or [alison.mcginty@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:alison.mcginty@argyll-bute.gov.uk)

## **Property Record/Copy Document Search Service**

Due to the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) coming into force on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018, together with our document retention policies, please now note that the Property Record/Copy Document Search Service is only available for records less than 25 years old or 50 years for major applications.

## **Staff Update**

Since December of 2017 Alasdair MacLulich and Carol Stirling, who were both based in our Oban office, have left the Council, their posts have now been filled by Peter Odoom who has joined us as an Assistant Building Standards Surveyor and Emily Buchanan who has joined us a Senior Clerical Assistant.

Realising our potential together

For more information, please see our website, [www.argyll-bute.gov.uk/planning-and-environment/building-standards](http://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.

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Alex Johnson who was based in our office in Campbeltown has now retired and his post has been filled by Michael Morrison who has joined us as an Assistant Building Standards Surveyor, Michael will be based in Lochgilphead meantime and will move to the Campbeltown office in the near future.

Alison McGinty has also joined the Building Standards Team as a Senior Admin Support Officer and is based in Lochgilphead.

### **Financial Position**

The 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 requires to save between £11m and £34m between 2018-21. Building Standards through commercialisation have managed to stave off having to make any savings, 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 our continued commercialisation.

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 fifth annual customer survey results have not yet been published. As soon as it is we will let you know, with the report being accessed online as usual. Many thanks for those of our service users who participated.

Last year Argyll & Bute Building Standards attained an overall customer satisfaction score of 8.1 against a national average of 6.7.

Hopefully this year will see us do just as well

As a way of continuing to improve our service we would welcome any comments and suggestions from yourselves

### **Customer Service Excellence (CSE)**

Our fifth year of rolling audit took place on the 6<sup>th</sup> December 2018 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 3 compliance pluses, now making a total of 15 compliance pluses, the most held in any section or service within the Council. As a result the team and I would like to thank all our service users for their continued support.

### **User Forums**

Similar to last year, with attendance again less than we would have liked, the only formal User Forum to go ahead was held in Oban on the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2018. An informal meeting was held in Lochgilphead and those that attended were happy with the format.

A copy of the [Building Standards Presentation](#) is available for viewing on our website.

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## Mailing List

We are aware that when we send out our newsletters, notification of user forums etc, not all of our agents wish to receive these. In order to ensure that no one is receiving email that they do not wish to get, we are creating a stand-alone mailing list. Should you wish your details to be on this mailing list then please let us know by responding to [bsonlinesubmission@argyll-bute.gov.uk](mailto:bsonlinesubmission@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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