

# Building Standards Newsletter December 2016

## Did you know that in 2015 – 2016

Building Standards received 264 Building Warrant and 102 Amendment to Warrant applications; 290 Building Warrants and 103 Amendment to Warrants were approved; 2 Building Warrants were refused; and 272 Completion Certificate submissions were accepted.

## Performance

We are continuously trying to improve the service we provide to our customers and have consistently performed better than the national average against the Scottish Governments Key Performance Outcomes. In the first two reporting periods for 2016 - 2017 the average time taken to grant a warrant was 42 working days; 96% Construction Compliance and Notification Plans were fully achieved; and 99.5% First Reports were issued within 20 working days. You can view our annual performance report from Building Standards Division on the “Verification Performance 2015-2016” pdf document, on the OIC website page: <http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Service-Directory/P/Performance-Indicators-for-Building-Standards.htm>.

## eBuildingStandards

The eBuilding Standards portal was launched on 24 August 2016 and early statistics provided by eDevelopment.scot are said to be phenomenal, across Scotland over 7,000 applications/forms have been submitted online in the first couple of months. You can view our local eBuilding Standards update – November 2016 on the OIC website:

[http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Files/Planning/Building-Standards/Latest-News-documents/eBuilding\\_Standards\\_Update\\_November\\_2016.pdf](http://www.orkney.gov.uk/Files/Planning/Building-Standards/Latest-News-documents/eBuilding_Standards_Update_November_2016.pdf)

## Customer Journey

The Building Standards Customer Journey guide was published by The Scottish Government earlier this year and includes valuable information for anyone who is planning to undertake building work or home improvements. You can access the guide, which clearly describes all aspects of the Building Standards system, including roles, responsibilities and web links to additional sources of supporting information on the Scottish Government website:

<http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00500237.pdf>

## Technical Handbook updates June 2016

Technical Handbooks were revised and published 01 June 2016. The changes include: new standard 4.14 and guidance on in-building physical infrastructure for high-speed electronic communications networks (broadband); and revised Standard 3.2 includes references for protection from radon gas. You can access the 2016 versions of the Technical Handbooks on the Scottish Government website: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Built-Environment/Building/Building-standards/techbooks/techhandbooks>

## Sewer Permit Process Review – Scottish Water

Scottish Water have recently reviewed their procedures relating to connection to the sewer system and are requesting that Local Authority Verifiers do not accept Temporary Occupation requests or Completion Certificate submissions unless evidence in the form of Sewer Permit Letter/Certificate of Compliance is made available. When approving a warrant where the drainage infrastructure connects to the public sewer Building Standards will include the Sewer Permit Letter/Certificate of Compliance as part of the CCNP Checklist.

## **Deemed Refusal**

Where warrants have not been approved within 9 months of the first Report being issued verifiers may refuse the warrant, or at their discretion, agree an extended period by which time sufficient additional information must be provided to allow the warrant to be approved. Building Standards Division recommend that applicants be encouraged get approvals in place as soon as possible, although they would in exceptional circumstances, support verifiers extending by up to 9 months beyond the 9 month deemed refusal date, but not beyond. Don't risk having your warrant refused, respond to requests for additional information timeously, and if you run into difficulty please don't hesitate to contact your Building Standards officer for help and advice.

## **Local Authority Building Standards Scotland – Dispute Resolution**

A dispute resolution process has been developed by Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) and the approach is supported by the Building Standards Division of the Scottish Government. Where you propose an alternative approach or dispute the case officer's interpretation of a building standard, and have exhausted all negotiation locally, the dispute can be escalated through the dispute resolution process. Initially the case would be referred to the Local Consortium Group by the Building Standards manager and where there is no consensus of agreement within the Consortium, the case would be referred to all local authorities. Once views are compared LABSS will establish an interpretation, which you will be informed of, and also circulated to all local authorities to aid consistency in interpretation.

## **Building Standards – Fees**

Scottish Government are currently running a consultation to seek views on increasing building warrant and other associated fees. The proposal is to increase fees to cover the costs of local authority Verification services and also the costs of the Scottish Government, specifically the Building Standards Division (BSD). In taking the fees review forward BSD established that the fee increase should deliver an approximate 10% increase on the overall fee revenue for local authority Verification services in 2015 – 2016.

## **Unauthorised Works**

Occasionally, and for a variety of reasons warrantable works may have been undertaken without the necessary permission having been sought. The lack of Completion Certificate can raise unexpected issues, for example delay the property conveyance process. In an attempt to regularise these unauthorised works you can submit a Late Completion Certificate Where No Building Warrant Obtained with the usual drawings and technical specification. Your submission will be subject to technical appraisal against the regulations in place when the submission is lodged, not when the works were actually carried out. You may therefore be required to complete some remedial works before we can accept the late submission.