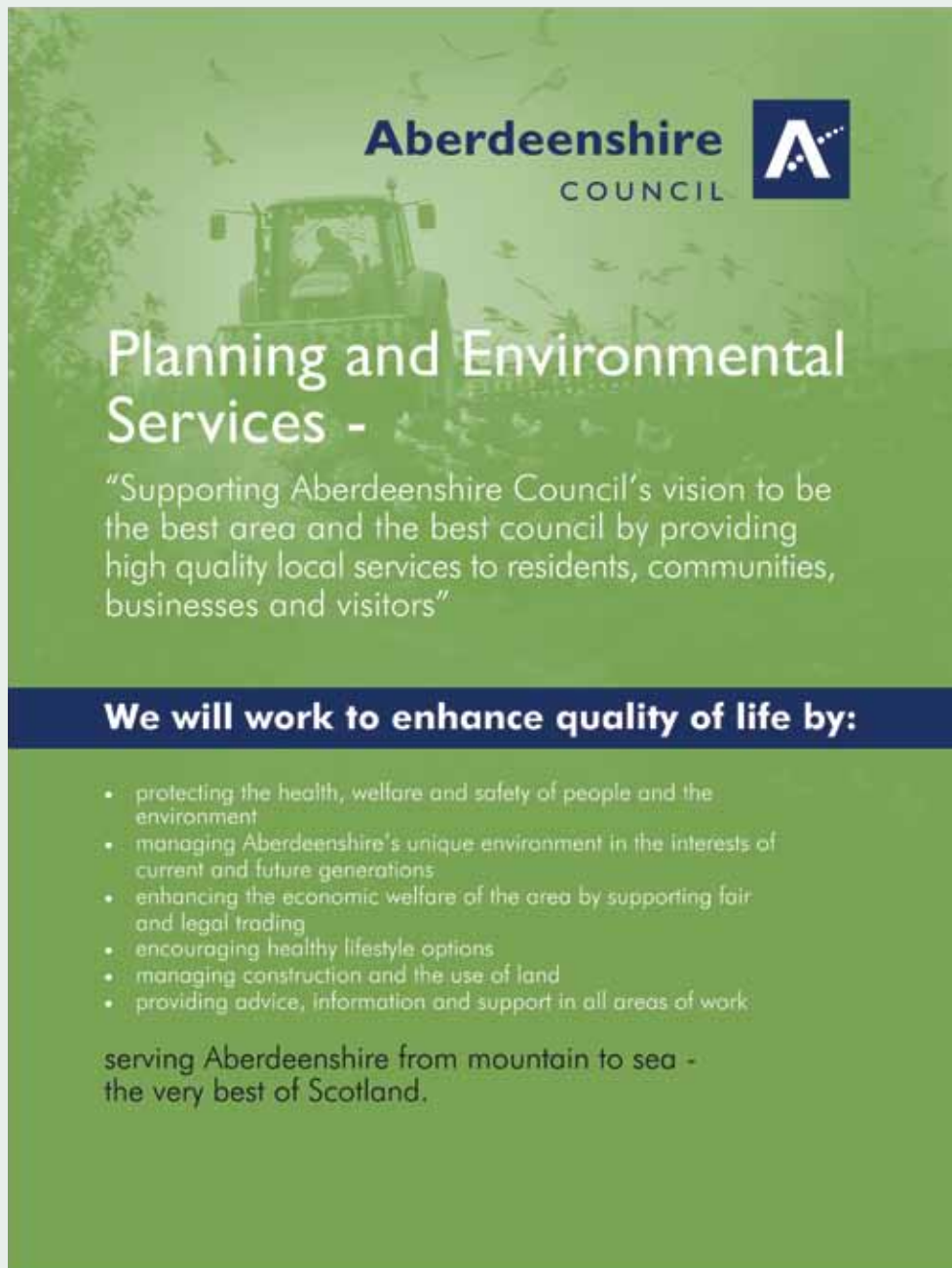


Aberdeenshire Council

Planning & Environmental Services

Building Standards Charter





Aberdeenshire
COUNCIL

Planning and Environmental Services -

“Supporting Aberdeenshire Council’s vision to be the best area and the best council by providing high quality local services to residents, communities, businesses and visitors”

We will work to enhance quality of life by:

- protecting the health, welfare and safety of people and the environment
- managing Aberdeenshire’s unique environment in the interests of current and future generations
- enhancing the economic welfare of the area by supporting fair and legal trading
- encouraging healthy lifestyle options
- managing construction and the use of land
- providing advice, information and support in all areas of work

serving Aberdeenshire from mountain to sea -
the very best of Scotland.

In contributing to the vision of Planning & Environmental Services, Building Standards will work to enhance quality of life by:

- managing Aberdeenshire’s unique environment in the interests of current and future generations
- managing construction
- providing advice, information and support in all areas of work.



Building Standards Charter

Introduction

The purpose of Building Standards is to ensure a healthy and safe environment throughout Aberdeenshire. This is primarily achieved by ensuring that building works comply with Building Regulations through the issue of Building Warrants and the inspection of completed works on site. The Regulations legislate for the Health, Safety and Welfare of people in and about buildings, the conservation of fuel and power, the provision of access and facilities for disabled people and for furthering the achievement of sustainable development.

The range of work covered by the Building Standards Service includes:

- **Pre-application discussion, information/advice.**
- **Processing of Building Warrant applications.**
- **Processing of submissions of Completion Certificates (2003 Act)**
- **Processing of applications for Certificates of Completion (1959 Act)**
- **Inspection of Works in progress and at completion stage.**
- **Property Inspection Service for minor works completed without final completions.**
- **Search out information relative to Building Warrant and Completion Certificates.**
- **Consultation and advice to the Licensing Section for public entertainment, Homes in Multiple Occupation, temporary structures and premises which require a liquor licence.**
- **Inspection of Dangerous and Defective Buildings and Structures.**

Purpose of the Building Standards Charter

The main purpose of this Charter aims to explain:

- 1 How the service is organised.**
- 2 Service standards.**
- 3 Complaints procedure.**

1 HOW THE SERVICE IS ORGANISED

The organisation of Building Standards within Aberdeenshire closely follows the structure of the Council itself. Across Aberdeenshire there are six Area Building Standards Teams, each serving one of the six administrative areas of the Council. The service centres for these Areas Teams are based at the following locations.

Service Centres

Banff and Buchan

Town House, Low Street, Banff
Tel: 01261 813200 Fax: 01261 818228

Buchan

Arbuthnot House, Broad Street, Peterhead
Tel: 01779 477363 Fax: 01779 483727

Formartine

45 Bridge Street, Ellon
Tel: 01358 726437 Fax: 01358 726450

Garioch

Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie
Tel: 01467 620981 Fax: 01467 628469

Kincardine & Mearns

Viewmount, Arduthie Road, Stonehaven
Tel: 01569 768300 Fax: 01569 766549

Marr

Viewmount, Arduthie Road, Stonehaven
Tel: 01569 768300 Fax: 01569 766549

In addition to the Service Centres, local Building Standards offices, staffed by Building Standards Surveyors are located at:

Banff and Buchan	>	<i>51 Mid Street, Fraserburgh, AB43 9EP</i>	☎ <i>01346 514866</i>
Formartine	>	<i>Municipal Buildings, High Street, Turriff, AB53 4EN</i>	☎ <i>01888 563417</i>
Marr	>	<i>Bellwood Road, Aboyne, AB34 5HQ</i>	☎ <i>01339 887373</i>
	>	<i>School Road, Alford, AB33 8TY</i>	☎ <i>01975 564806</i>
	>	<i>The Square, High Street, Banchory, AB31 5RW</i>	☎ <i>01330 822878</i>
	>	<i>25 Gordon Street, Huntly, AB54 8EQ</i>	☎ <i>01466 794121</i>

Building Standards Surveyors are available for advice and consultation at these locations. As surveyors are often out on site visits, phoning to make an appointment is recommended.

2 SERVICE STANDARDS

Submitting a Building Warrant Application

When a Building Warrant Application is submitted to us, we will:

- Register an application within 24 hours of receipt, measured in working days.
- Notify you within 5 working days of receiving your application if it is invalid and explain what is required before it can be registered as valid.
- Assess your application within 20 working days for compliance with the requirements of the Building Standards Regulations and notify you of technical issues that require to be addressed before a Building Warrant can be issued.
- Issue Building Warrant approvals within 6 working days of receipt of required Technical Information.
- Inspect completed works within 6 working days of receipt of a Completion Certificate submission.
- Confirm acceptance of a Completion Certificate within three working days.
- Visit potentially dangerous buildings within 4 hours.

Following Approval of Building Warrant

A Building Warrant is valid for a period of 3 years from the date of approval. It is the responsibility of the relevant person/duly authorised agent to ensure that the works are completed within this period. If the work is not completed within this period, an application to extend the life of the Warrant must be made prior to the Warrant expiring.

You are required to inform the Building Standards Service of the date when work will commence by completing the Commencement of Work document, which is part of the approval package.

Building Standards Surveyors may inspect works under construction. The Building Standards system in Scotland however is a pre-emptive system and the majority of control is achieved at the plan assessment stage. It is the responsibility of the applicant or an agent appointed by the applicant to ensure the works are supervised and completed in accordance with the approved plans and the Building Regulations. Inspections by the Building Standards Service can be very limited and will not monitor all stages of building work. It should also be noted that the Building Standards Service cannot act as supervisors or clerk of works for an applicant.



Building Standards Charter

On completion of works covered by a Building Warrant, the Completion Certificate Submission must be submitted on the prescribed form. This is a signed declaration by an applicant/agent that the works have been completed in accordance with the Building Regulations and approved plans. Where the proposals include electrical works an appropriate electrical Compliance Certificate to BS7671 must be signed by a competent electrician.

Where a Completion Certificate Submission has been rejected the applicant/agent shall be informed of the reasons why.

It is the responsibility of the applicant/agent to inform Building Standards when the works are ready for re- inspection.

It is an offence to occupy or use a new building which does not have the benefit of an Accepted Completion Certificate Submission.

Dangerous Buildings

Local authorities have powers under the Building (Scotland) Act to ensure that buildings are maintained in a safe condition for the benefit of the public in and around buildings. Where the local authority has been advised that a building is considered to be dangerous we will visit the property within 4 hours.

Buildings which pose an immediate danger will be made safe or fenced off as soon as possible. Enforcement action shall be used where appropriate.

If, on inspection, a building is not considered to be an immediate danger the owner of the building will be contacted and advised what steps to take to remove the danger.

Failure to take the appropriate steps to make the building safe within a prescribed timetable may result in enforcement action being taken against the owner.

Performance Standards and Targets

- Time taken to respond to a request for a Building Warrant – 80% within 20 working days.
- Time taken to issue a Building Warrant – 80% within 6 working days.
- Time taken to respond to a Completion Certificate submission/application – average of 6 working days.
- Time taken to issue a Completion Certificate or Acceptance of a Completion Certificate – 80% within 3 working days.
- Time taken from notification of a dangerous building report to attendance on site by a member of staff – 90% within 4 hours.

3 COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Building Standards is a complex procedure and individuals may consider that their application has not been dealt with effectively or efficiently. Aberdeenshire Council is committed to continually improving the services which it provides to the people of Aberdeenshire and has developed a four step complaints procedure for all Council Services.

A copy of the leaflet entitled "Have your say" can be obtained from each of the main Service Centres, Area Offices and on-line. The leaflet sets out the steps that you can take if you wish to make a complaint relating to the standard of service that you have received, or alternatively have any ideas that you wish to suggest in order that we can improve our services.

Essentially the procedure involves:

Step 1

Contact the person that you have been dealing with in the first instance and discuss what is troubling you. If you do not wish to speak to that person you may contact his/her manager.

Step 2

If you cannot resolve the matter you may wish to consider submitting a formal complaint. You can do this by:

- 1 **Returning the complaint form to Freepost Aberdeenshire Council.**
- 2 **Writing to the Area Manager responsible for the relevant area of Aberdeenshire Council.**
- 3 **Ask a member of staff to write down the complaint for you.**
- 4 **Phone the Area Manager with your complaint.**

The names and addresses of each Area Manager can be found at all of the main Service Centres or the Area Offices, or on the complaints procedure leaflet.

Your complaint will be acknowledged within five working days. A senior officer will investigate your complaint within 28 days and will write to you saying what we have found and what we intend to do to answer your complaint.

Step 3

If you think that the response does not fully answer your complaint you should write again to the Council's Chief Executive at Woodhill House, Aberdeen. The Chief Executive will consider the matter and then write to you.

Step 4

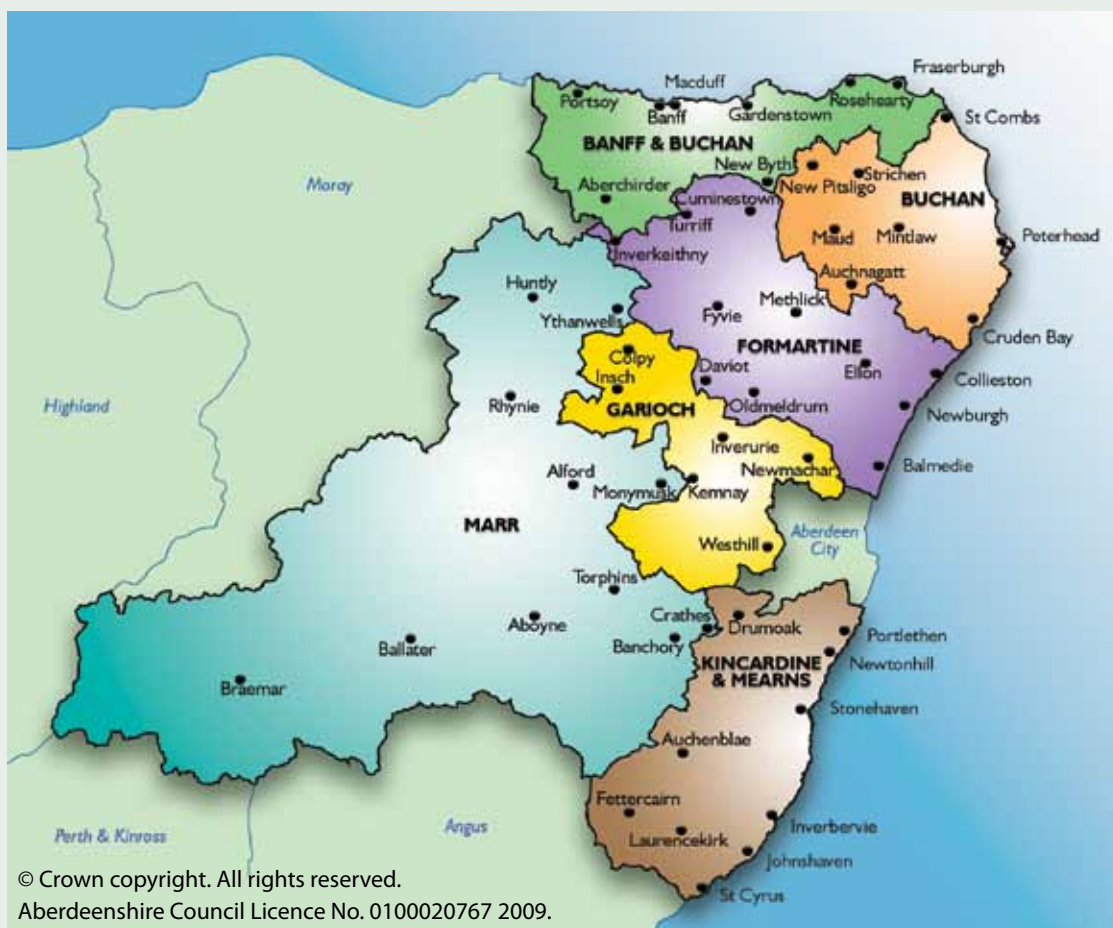
You can also contact the Local Government Ombudsman in Edinburgh if you consider that your complaint has not been dealt with properly. The full address is provided in the 'Have your say' leaflet.

Future steps

We aim to continually improve the Building Standards Service within Aberdeenshire Council using a range of continuous improvement initiatives. As part of our ongoing commitment to improving services to our customers we aim to:

- Monitor and report on performance of the service on a quarterly basis.
- Publish Building Standards advice leaflets on a range of topics.
- Continue Agent focus groups comprised of a number of frequent users of the Service to discuss initiatives and service delivery.
- Update the Building Standards Charter as required.
- Build on our existing customer care surveys.

Building Standards Charter



Building Standards Offices

- Aboyne:** Bellwood Road, Aboyne, AB34 5HQ ☎ 01339 887373
- Alford:** School Road, Alford, AB33 8TY ☎ 01975 564806
- Banchory:** The Square, High Street, Banchory, AB31 5RW ☎ 01330 822878
- Banff:** Town House, Low Street, Banff, AB45 1AY ☎ 01261 813200
- Ellon:** 45 Bridge Street, Ellon, AB41 9AA..... ☎ 01358 726437
- Fraserburgh:** 51 Mid Street, Fraserburgh, AB43 9EP ☎ 01346 514866
- Huntly:** 25 Gordon Street, Huntly, AB54 8EQ..... ☎ 01466 794121
- Inverurie:** Gordon House, Blackhall Road, Inverurie, AB51 3WA ☎ 01467 620981
- Peterhead:** Arbuthnot House, Broad Street, Peterhead, AB42 1DA..... ☎ 01779 477363
- Stonehaven:** Viewmount, Arduthie Road, Stonehaven, AB39 2DQ..... ☎ 01569 768300
- Turriff:** Municipal Buildings, High Street, Turriff, AB53 4EN..... ☎ 01888 563417



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April 2009

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