

# Planning & Building Standards Customer Charter

Reviewed October 2020



## Introduction

Planning and Building Standards are responsible for delivering a range of services including Building Standards, Development Management, Development Plans, Antonine Wall and the Place and Design Panel. The Charter outlines information on the standards of service that we aim to provide. It's aim is to provide an excellent customer experience to all stakeholders by providing a high quality efficient service.

In order to deliver the most cost effective and responsive service to you, our preferred method of response will be via the email.

## Our Service Standards

Our Aims:

- To provide good value, efficient and effective services to all our customers.
- To treat everyone fairly and with respect.
- To be open, honest and accountable for our actions.
- To consult and listen to customers.
- To strive for continuous improvement in our services and processes.

If you contact us by telephone we will:

- Answer your call promptly – within 6 rings where possible.
- Give you our name.
- Be polite, friendly and professional.
- Try to resolve your query there and then.
- Return calls between 8.45am - 4.45pm, Mon to Thurs, 8.45am – 3.55pm Friday.

If you write or email we will:

- Provide a full response to simple queries within 10 working days, or 20 working days for queries which require research. If we can't answer your query in these timescales we'll let you know why.
- Use plain English in our reply and use a format or language which suits your needs.
- Provide the name, telephone number and email address of the person dealing with your enquiry.

When we visit you our staff will:

- Visit at a convenient agreed date and time.
- Have identification badges.
- Aim to keep to our appointment and if this is not possible or if there is a delay we will inform you as soon as practicable.

## Covid 19

Given the current Covid-19 situation, and in accordance with Government guidelines, stakeholders are unable to visit the office. During this time the main source of contact is via email. On occasion there has been unavoidable delay with written communication such as notifying neighbours of planning applications that have been submitted however we are applying flexibility to ensure those with an interest in applications and who wish to submit representation have sufficient time to respond and input following notification. Planning and Building Standards have risen to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 situation and we are maintaining a remote service and continuing to determine planning applications in a timely manner and ensuring a good and quality level of service for all our customers.



## Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Team are responsible for the preparation of the Local Development Plan for the West Dunbartonshire planning authority area, and for input to the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan.

The Team is also responsible for providing planning policy advice on planning applications and for monitoring development land and town centre uses. Information on the current Development Plan and the timetable for preparing its replacement can be found in the Council's Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement.

The Forward Planning Team will:

- Maintain an up-to-date Local Development Plan for the area, reviewing the Plan at least every 5 years.
- Annually review the Development Plan Scheme and Participation Statement.
- Maintain a database of all people and organisations with an interest in the Local Development Plan.
- Issue a newsletter at key stages of the Local Development Plan process.
- Consult widely at key stages of the Local Development Plan process.
- Be open to alternative suggestions arising from consultations.
- Be readily available to meet with people and organisations with an interest in the sustainable development of the area.
- Publish the Local Development Plan and associated information on-line and make it available in Council libraries.
- Provide annual information on housing completions and housing land, business and vacant and derelict land, and town centre uses.
- Represent the interests of West Dunbartonshire in the Strategic Development Plan and National Planning Framework and in joint working partnerships.

## Development Management

The Development Management Team is responsible for promoting development and regulating the use of land and buildings in the public interest.

Our primary responsibility is the consideration and determination of applications for planning permission and related consents. We also exercise the Council's planning enforcement powers where necessary, and we provide general planning advice to developers and other members of the public.

The Development Management Team aim to:

- Notify applicants of whether their application is valid or invalid within 3 working days of receipt.
- Acknowledge representations from members of the public within 3 working days of receipt.
- Negotiate social, economic or environmental improvements in at least 80% of major applications.
- Aim to achieve an average determination period of under 8 weeks for householder and local non-householder applications and an average of 16 weeks for 'major development' applications and those subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment.
- Notify applicants and objectors of decisions within 3 working day of the decision being made.
- Provide high quality pre-application advice to prospective developers.
- Provide an initial response to enforcement complaints within 5 days.

## Building Standards

The Building Standards Team are responsible for providing the full range of verification services in respect of Building Warrant Applications.

We also deal with dangerous buildings and unauthorised work, as well as allocation of new street names and assessing raised structure applications. We contribute to the Council's Corporate Address Gazetteer and assist other Council sections determine applications for various licensing applications; such as alcohol, houses in multiple occupation, sports grounds and open air concerts.

The Building Standards Team aim to:

- Register valid Building Warrant Applications within 3 working days of receipt and send acknowledgement notification providing the application reference, along with the name and contact details of the surveyor who will be dealing with the application.
- Notify you if a Building Warrant Application is invalid within 3 working days of receipt stating why it is invalid and what you need to do to make the application valid.
- Carry out a full technical check of 95% of Building Warrant Applications within 20 working days of validation.
- Approve 90% of Building Warrant Applications within 10 working days following receipt of revised/updated information which fully answers previous technical check.

## Complaints

We publish our complaints procedure on the web site.

We investigate complaints thoroughly and let you know the outcome.

If we are unable to resolve a complaint immediately we will acknowledge it within 3 working days.

<https://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk/council/complaints-and-feedback/complaints-procedure/>

## How to Contact Us

You can contact us in a variety of ways :-

Telephone	0141 951 7930
e-mail	<a href="mailto:planningandbuildingcontrol@west-dunbarton.gov.uk">planningandbuildingcontrol@west-dunbarton.gov.uk</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk">www.west-dunbarton.gov.uk</a>
In person	Planning and Building Standards West Dunbartonshire Council 16 Church Street Dumbarton G82 1QL
Opening hours	Monday to Thursday 8.45 – 4.45pm Friday 8.45 – 3.55pm