

# Guidance Notes on Charges for Building Control Services



Local Authority Building Control for Wealden, Eastbourne, Rother and

## Explanatory Notes

Effective from 1 January 2021

Local Authorities have a statutory duty to set charges in accordance with The Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010 on a cost recovery basis. Charges are based on the hours we estimate it will take to complete our services including all plan checking, site inspection, consultations and certification.

Building Regulations charges will differ across the main application types of Full Plans, Building Notice and Regularisation. They also include for supplementary charges in some circumstances, for example where our costs are greater than expected. Please see the terms and conditions at the bottom of this document.

This guide contains various standard charges for single elements of work. Where more than one element of work is being carried out we will provide a bespoke quotation as this often reduces the overall plan checking or site inspection time and those savings are passed to the customer.

All standard charges include VAT at the standard rate, except Regularisation applications which incur a supplementary charge instead.

Although some non-domestic charges are included in this guide, the majority will require an individual quote. This is so we may more accurately determine our involvement and so give you the most competitive quote possible.

The Full Plans Application route **MUST** be used in the following situations:

- All non-domestic projects, e.g. commercial
- Residential projects such as flats with a common area
- Conversion or alterations to HMO's
- Conversion or alteration to holiday lets
- Building near or over Public sewers requiring consultation with the statutory undertaker
- Buildings being erected that front private streets
- Any project covered under The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requiring consultation with the East Sussex Fire & Rescue Service.

**To obtain a bespoke quotation or to make a card payment, please contact us:**

[Building.control@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:Building.control@wealden.gov.uk)

01892 602005

**Full terms and conditions appear at the end of this document**

## FULL PLANS APPLICATION

This is where plans, technical details, calculations and specifications are deposited with the Council prior to work starting on site. The advantage of a full plans application is that construction details can be agreed in advance giving more confidence of compliance. Full Plans applications comprise two charges:

- **Plans Charge** payable when the application is deposited. This covers registration, the technical audit of information, consultations and the issue of a formal decision notice.
- **Inspection Charge** Payable on the commencement of works on site. This covers our 3<sup>rd</sup> party onsite spot checking of various stages of construction through to satisfactory completion including all office based work, travel, checking certificates and issue of a completion certificate.

## BUILDING NOTICE

The advantage of a Building Notice is that this can be submitted with no supporting information and works can start 48 hours later. Please note though, that we are entitled to ask for information where we feel this is necessary to determine compliance, e.g. structural calculations. Due to the lack of information, it is vital to select a competent builder and to discuss and agree details with our surveyors prior to that stage being reached.

The **Building Notice Charge** is payable in full when the application is made.

## REGULARISATION APPLICATION

This is for retrospective approval of work commenced or completed before a building regulation application has been made. It is important to note that we will require sufficient evidence of compliance through documentation, certification, and photographs; and where necessary, we may require certain areas of work to be opened up for inspection.

It is advisable to discuss the works with a surveyor and even to arrange a site visit before the application is made so you may fully understand the extent of the information we will need and what work needs to be opened for inspection. This may be done through the Pre-Application Advice route detailed below.

The **Regularisation Charge** is VAT exempt but is made up of the NET Building Notice fee plus 25%.

## PRE APPLICATION ADVICE

Most of our advice is provided for free however where this exceed one hour, a charge may be made. This however can be deducted from the application charges when deposited.

## DISABLED ADAPTATIONS AND EXTENSIONS

Works solely to provide access and/or facilities for disabled people to existing dwellings and buildings to which the public have access are exempt from charges. In these regulations 'disabled person' means a person who is within any of the descriptions of persons to whom Section 29(1) of the National Assistance Act 1948 as extended applies

**RESUBMISSION** of a rejected Full Plans application for essentially the same work will not be charged however, where amendments have been made that require additional checking, these will be charged at our standard hourly rate of £78.82 plus VAT.

## ESTIMATED COST OF WORKS

This means a reasonable estimate that would be charged by a professional builder, but excluding professional charges and VAT

**Table 1: NEW DWELLINGS**

Description of Work		Full Plans		Building Notice Charge
		Plan Charge	Inspection Charge	
1	Erection of a single dwelling house up to 3 storeys and 250m <sup>2</sup>	340	580	990
2	Erection of 2 dwelling houses each up to 3 storeys and 250m <sup>2</sup>	440	830	1370
<p><b>We would welcome the opportunity to discuss bespoke quotes for multiple dwellings and flats. Repetitive work reduces our costs which are passed to the customer through competitive quotations.</b></p> <p><b>It is also an opportunity to discuss service levels and warranties</b></p>				

**TABLE 2: DOMESTIC EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS**

Description of Work		Full Plans Application		Building Notice Charge
		Plan Charge	Inspection Charge	
3	Garage/outbuilding; Single storey & up to 60m <sup>2</sup>	150	300	470
4	Garage/outbuilding between 60 and 100m <sup>2</sup> or with habitable room or storage over	200	400	630
Note: Some non-habitable detached buildings under 30m <sup>2</sup> are exempt from Building Regulations				
5	Single Storey Extensions up to 15m <sup>2</sup> floor area	220	320	570
6	Extensions between 15m <sup>2</sup> and 60m <sup>2</sup> floor area	260	400	690
7	Extensions between 60m <sup>2</sup> and 100m <sup>2</sup> floor area	300	510	850
8	First Floor Extension up to 40m <sup>2</sup>	240	340	600
9	Loft Conversion to 1 or 2 storey dwelling up to 40m <sup>2</sup>	240	400	670
10	Loft Conversion to 1 or 2 storey dwelling between 40 and 100m <sup>2</sup>	280	450	760
11	Garage Conversion under 40m <sup>2</sup>	160	220	420

Continued.....

**Table 2 Continued: DOMESTIC EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS**

Description of Work		Full Plans Application		Building Notice Charge
		Plan Charge	Inspection Charge	
12	Minor work requiring one visit on a Building Notice	N/A	N/A	140
13	Alterations up to £5000 estimated cost	120	150	280
14	Alterations up to £5000 when in addition to another element of work	60	75	140
<p>Estimated cost of work is not always the best way to estimate the cost of our service. Please contact the office to discuss so that we may provide you with a competitive quote.</p>				
<p>All domestic charges assume that a qualified electrician registered under a Government Competent Person Scheme will undertake and self-certify under BS7671, all work relating to Part P of the Building Regulations</p>				
<p><b>If your project does not appear in these table or is part of a multiple works project, please contact the office for a quote. The reason we ask this is so we are able to more accurately assess our service hours and so provide you with the best quote possible. Remember; as a local authority, we are a non-profit organisation.</b></p>				

**TABLE 3: NON-DOMESTIC**

Description of Work		Full Plans Application	
		Plan Charge	Inspection Charge
15	Single Storey Extensions up to 15m <sup>2</sup> floor area	320	435
16	Alterations up to £10,000 estimated cost	250	360
17	Mezzanine Storage Floor up to 500m <sup>2</sup>	340	380
18	Shop Fit up to 500m <sup>2</sup>	320	370

## Terms and conditions

- a. The deposit of a Building Regulation application forms a private contract between the applicant and the Council.
- b. We will retain all information for a minimum of 15 years as detailed in the Building Control Performance Standards. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/building-control-performance-standards>
- c. The corporate data protection policy is available via our main website  
<https://www.wealden.gov.uk/transparency-spending-and-performance/data-protection/?RD=True>
- d. Many of our services are subject to Key Performance Indicators. In respect of Full Plans applications we aim to complete a technical audit of plans within 15 working days. We currently average over 85% for this KPI.
- e. Building Control inspections are not intended as a substitute for Clerk of Works or Architect Supervision. It is essentially a series of 3<sup>rd</sup> party spot checks intended to provide reasonable confidence, but not definitive proof, that work complies with the Building Regulations. Completion Certificates are issued on the basis of "as far as can be seen".
- f. Responsibility for constructing in compliance with the Building Regulations remains with the owner, designers and contractors, who should be carefully selected. **Charges are set on the basis that the design and building work is undertaken by a person or company that is competent to carry out the relevant design and building work. If they are not, the work may incur supplementary charges payable prior to the issuing of a completion certificate, however the BCS will advise you/your agent if this is likely to be the case as work progresses on site.**
- g. Structural calculations submitted as part of the application or requested subsequently will be risk assessed to determine the level of checking required. Where an engineer is professionally qualified, has indemnity insurance and is using established design methods, these calculations may receive just a cursory check or simply be accepted.
- h. Further supplementary payment may be requested should the actual service hours exceed the original estimated hours. For the purposes of this calculation, the first hour will be disregarded. This may arise where:
  - The projects turns out to be more complex than anticipated requiring additional time to check the design or supporting information, or the engagement of a specialist to advise us. This may happen where elements of the project or the project as a whole deviate from standard or accepted construction methods or materials, or from the Approved Documents that support The Building Regulations.  
  
For example, where a fire engineered approach is required to means of escape, where thermal heat loss calculations are required due to excessive glazing or where the structure or construction details turn out to be non-standard/complex. This is most common with calculation; see below.
  - The project is changed after the initial technical audit of plans, requiring addition checking time of details or calculations.
  - Calculations have not been produced by a professionally qualified engineer and/or have not been produced using recognised methodology.
  - The customer has requested a higher service level. For example additional site visits or attendance at Design Team meetings.
  - After risk assessment of the professionals/individuals/company involved it is decided that the design or site construction requires additional checking time to ensure compliance.
  - Additional inspections are requested due to site conditions or the contractor splitting the work into stages or phases. For example, project charges may have been discounted for 2 extensions in anticipation of them being constructed more or less at the same time so allowing for less visits. If those elements are then split buy time, they will require full inspection of each resulting in more, not less visits.
- i. ARCHIVED FILES: Charges assume work will continue at a reasonable speed through to satisfactory completion within 18 months. Where no visit has been requested for a period in excess of 24 months we may write to advise you that the file will be archived. If the work recommences, a charge of £50 including VAT will be made. It may also be necessary to re-estimate the charge for remaining inspections to reflect current costs/hourly rate.

- j. Where the actual service hours are less than originally estimated, the Council may make an appropriate refund of part of the charge on satisfactory completion of the application. For the purposes of this calculation, the first hour will be disregarded.
- k. All of our domestic charges assume that electrical (Part P) and heating installations will be self-certified by a qualified person(s) who is also registered under an appropriate Government approved **Competent Persons Scheme**. Where this is not the case an additional charge may be made to engage a consultant to establish that the work meets the requirements of the Building Regulations.
- l. The depth and design of all foundations is subject to amendment when soil conditions have been fully investigated. This is the responsibility of the owner or their professional representatives, e.g. builder or Architect.
- m. Refund of charges on cancellation of an application is at the discretion of the Building Control Manager. Any refund will take into account hours spent by Surveyors and administration to the point of cancellation. A minimum charge of one hour at our hourly rate of £78.82 will be retained to cover administration and overheads.
- n. Applications remain invalid and of no effect until the plans fee has been received in full or where the fee cannot be agreed upon. We will write or contact you to advise that the application is invalid and what you need to do to validate it. If an application remains invalid for more than 21 days we will return it and refund fees paid minus any cost we have incurred.(see i above)
- o. For certain work under the Building Regulations you will also need to apply for planning permission under the Planning Acts. (You may have to pay extra for this). All formal advice regarding planning **MUST** be made by contacting the Development Control Team. Surveyors cannot offer formal planning advice.
- p. For further advice on Building Regulations call 01892 602005 or e-mail, [building.control@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:building.control@wealden.gov.uk)

### Complaints

Dissatisfaction with any aspect of service delivery can be raised through the Corporate Complaints system, details of which can be found using this link: <https://www.wealden.gov.uk/complaints-procedure/>