

Building Standards

Service Improvement Log (v5)

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Service improvements

Service improvements are brought about by customers' comments and suggestions, comments and suggestions from Building Standards team members, sharing within the South East Scotland Building Standards Consortium and benchmarking with other local authorities and other organisations.

ID	Description	Reason	Anticipated benefit to customers	Suggested by	Introduced
1	Implementation of improved risk management process for building warrant allocation to case surveyor.	Aid adherence to performance indicators.	To enhance service/faster service in accordance with the performance indicators.	Staff	2012
2	Introduce mailbox for Building Standards.	For improved communications with Building Standards.	Faster service.	Staff/member of public	2012
3	Enhanced use of reports, broken down into separate parts to clearly detail outstanding issues.	Reports used to try and ensure targets are achieved.	More consistent service to customers.	Staff	2013
4	Produce guidance for submitting a building warrant application, including structural information.	To inform Applicant/Agent of requirements in advance of submission.	More knowledge which leads to improved submissions with faster turnaround times.	Members of public/agents	2013
5	Investor In People (IIP award).	Enhance Customer Service.	Enhanced service.	Staff	2013

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6	Awarded Customer Service Excellence.	Enhance Customer Service.	Enhanced service.	Staff	2013
7	Introduce Copy documents service.	Delays in processing request due to missing information or unclear requests.	Improve service for those seeking copies of official documents.	Staff	2014
8	Forms on Midlothian Building Standards website are now typewriter-enabled.	To allows forms to be submitted in typewriter-enabled format.	An easier way to complete the forms.	Member of public	2014
9	Re-awarded Customer Service Excellence.	Enhance Customer Service.	Enhanced service.	Staff	2014
10	Produce guidance for completing Building Standards application forms.	Forms not always complete due to being complex/confusing.	Faster service.	Member of public	2015
11	Re-awarded Customer Service Excellence.	Enhance Customer Service.	Enhanced service.	Staff	2015
12	Simplify jargon in letters and information provided.	Update official notification letters to remove jargon and unnecessary legal phrases.	Simpler and more user friendly.	Staff/benchmarking with other authorities	2016
13	Improve reminders for building warrant applications.	Improve frequency (6 and 8 month) and clarity of reminder letters to building warrant applicants of the date of refusal for their application.	Better time management to decrease change of having to reapply for a new building warrant (with no refund of fees).	Staff/members of the public	2016
14	Develop and publicise new group call phone number for general enquiries.	Improved chance of talking directly to surveyor about a general enquiry, rather than leaving voicemails.	Improved query response.	Feedback	2016

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15	Develop and roll-out responsive website.	A responsive website anticipates and responds to its users' needs, allowing them to quickly and easily complete their task no matter what device they are on.	Improved usability of website – simpler and more user friendly. Hemingway App to make text simpler and clearer.	Feedback/benchmarking	2016
16	Re-awarded Customer Service Excellence.	Enhance Customer Service.	Enhanced service.	Staff	2016
17	Introduce eBuilding Standards.	Provide an efficient and supportive process for members of the public and professional services to submit building standards applications online.	To speed up applications and to reduce costs.	Members of public, staff, LABSS and Scottish Government	2016
18	Develop ventilation guide.	Condense a number of published sources into one simple ventilation guide and commissioning sheet.	Improve quality of information available and improve ease of sign off for applicants.	Architect and builder	2017
19	Introduce Alternative Evidence template for drainage.	With permission from Midlothian Building Standards, applicants and builders are permitted to confirm suitability of installed new drainage.	Allows continuation of building works where Building Standards are unable to inspect drainage at a specific time or date.	Staff and LABSS	2017
20	Use of external Environmental Health consultant for peer reviews.	To improve time management and clarity of peer reviews for contaminated land and ground gas.	To improve timescale of responses and quality of information.	Agents and engineers	2017

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22	Develop simplified guidance on inspections and completion.	To aide applicants with inspection and completion processes.	Improved applicant understanding and response, resulting in fewer delays.	Feedback	2017
22	Introduce Viewing Documents service.	To enable applicants and agents access to apply to view building warrant documents.	To improve content and quality of applications.	Member of public	2017
23	Issued update emails or letters to applicants when reports are issued to their agent for building warrant applications.	To help applicants see how their application is progressing and to be aware of revisions required to be undertaken by their agent.	To improve communications between applicants and agents and help to reduce timescales for gaining approval.	Feedback	2018
24	Issued application update emails or letters to applicants with agents once approval is granted.	To allow applicants to be aware that their application has been granted and that work can start on site.	To improve communications with applicants and agents and to enable work to start on site without delay after approval.	Feedback	2018
25	Advertise how all the basic Building Standards processes work (apply for a building warrant, inspections and completion).	To help applicants understand the basic Building Standards processes.	To improve timescales for gaining a building warrant, to improve timing of site inspections and to shorten timescales for gaining completion.	Feedback	2018
26	Introduce a simplified Temporary Raised Structures process for structures (stages) use for Midlothian-wide community gala days etc.	To ensure documentation for all structures (stages) used in gala days etc. meets the relevant legislation.	Required documentation is submitted and signed off correctly in a timely manner.	Staff	2018
27	Develop non-domestic Energy calculations (SBEM) checking guide.	Collate numerous sources of information into one SBEM checklist.	Improve efficiency and scope of checking SBEM submissions.	Staff and LABSS	2018

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28	Introduce a simpler time recording system for Building Standards staff.	Save staff time by reduce time and task recording workload.	Improve efficiency and response times.	Staff	2018
29	Develop service for assessing capacity of local football grounds.	Requests for assistance assessing local football ground capacities.	Process to assist local football clubs to meet requirements of new SFA legislation.	Applicants	2018
30	Develop guidance on submitting electronic documents via the eBuilding Standards portal.	Requests from applicants for assistance on submitting electronic documents.	Step-by-step guidance for applicants unfamiliar with using the eBuilding Standards portal.	Staff	2019
31	Publicize Midlothian Council's policy on ground gas protection in the Gorebridge area.	To ensure all agents and applicants are aware of the Midlothian Council policy being implemented by the Building Standards Section.	Ensuring proposals comply with requirements of Midlothian Council's policy on ground gas protection in the Gorebridge area.	Architects focus group	2019
32	Develop an easy to use way of giving feedback for electronic applications.	Limited numbers of Customer Care Survey returned for electronic building warrant applications.	Simpler and quicker web-based method to complete and submit Customer Care Survey, including provided customer feedback.	Staff	2019
33	<i>Moved Building Standards service to principally a homeworking basis.</i>	<i>In light of COVI-19 pandemic, provided IT kit to enable staff to work at home.</i>	<i>Permits the full Building Standards service to continue to operate without delays.</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>2020</i>
34	<i>Introduced live remote video inspections</i>	<i>To allow reasonable enquiry for the key stages during work on site, thus permitting completion certificates to be issued.</i>	<i>Facilitates safe and convenient inspections of key stages during work on site.</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>2020</i>

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35	<i>Introduced a streamline Copy documents procedure.</i>	<i>To permit access to copies of building warrants and completion certificates from our archive.</i>	<i>Simpler and clearer process, with fewer fee refunds due to inaccessible documents being applied for at short notice.</i>	<i>Staff and applicants</i>	<i>2021</i>
36	<i>Continue to support applicants and agents wishing to submit paper building warrant applications.</i>	<i>Allows the continued submission of paper applications in lieu of submitting electronically via the eBuilding Standards portal.</i>	<i>Permits the method of preparing and submitting building warrant applications to continue to be used.</i>	<i>Staff and applicants</i>	<i>2021</i>
37	<i>Introduced a streamline procedure for processing electronic documents for multiplot housing site.</i>	<i>To simplify and speed up the processing of Completion certificate submissions.</i>	<i>Reduced delays in completion certificates being issued.</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>2021</i>