

Building control policy for standards of building control service

NHBC Building Control Services Limited

Policy

NHBC Building Control Services (BCS) will make available, on request, this policy for the provision of its building control service to all enquirers. The policy will be reviewed annually, taking into account workload, resources and legislation.

Resources

NHBC BCS will deploy sufficient experienced and qualified staff, appropriate to the type of building control work undertaken, in order to meet its duties under the Building Act 1984.

After regular reviews of current and forecast workloads, sufficient resources will be allocated to enable NHBC BCS to discharge its duties with reasonable skill and care to comply with the Building Control Performance Standards. Ongoing formal reviews of resources and staffing shall be regularly undertaken, to address fluctuations in workload.

Project acceptance: formal procedures will be in place to review the capability and/or capacity of NHBC BCS to accept projects either individually or collectively. Managers will be responsible for ensuring capacity constraints (resource versus workload) are continuously monitored.

Resources for existing projects: a process of continuous review shall be undertaken to ensure existing projects are adequately resourced.

Consultation

NHBC BCS will undertake all statutory consultations in a timely manner. It shall consider the possible desirability of undertaking additional consultations. It will, where appropriate, co-operate as far as possible in a 'one-stop shop' approach to development consents.

Assessment of plans

When assessing plans and designs, clear information shall be communicated to the client regarding:

- non-compliance with the Building Regulations
- views of statutory consultees
- conditions pertaining to the approval or passing of plans
- remedies available in the event of a dispute over compliance.

Records of the plan assessment process: records shall be kept of the design assessment philosophy, and any statutory and/or discretionary consultations, for future reference and continuity of control.

Site inspection

Site inspection regime: NHBC BCS will maintain an appropriate site inspection regime, which takes full account of relevant factors such as the:

- degree of detail in the design assessment process
- nature of the work
- experience of the builder
- complexity and rate of build
- unusual or high risk features
- notification arrangements
- key construction stages.

Relevant factors shall be assessed at the outset and regularly reviewed, so that effective control is maintained for the duration of each project, with adequate recording, to demonstrate the application of reasonable skill and care.

Site inspection records: records of each inspection shall be maintained, which identify the work inspected and any non-compliance. Where plans are not available for the work, these records will necessarily be more detailed.



Contraventions: non-compliant work (contraventions) shall be communicated promptly and clearly to the responsible person, identifying the contravention(s) and indicating any measure(s) believed to be necessary to remedy the situation. The method for appealing against NHBC BCS's decisions will be explained as and when necessary.

Notification of consultees: during the inspection phase, NHBC BCS shall ensure that all statutory consultees are notified of any significant departures from plans.

Certificates of completion

Upon satisfactory completion of the relevant work, NHBC BCS shall give a final Certificate to the local authority, the direct client and other appropriate persons.

Archiving of records

All records relating to the building control service provided to individual projects shall be retained by NHBC BCS for a minimum period of 15 years. Arrangements shall be made for their transfer into safe keeping in the event of NHBC BCS ceasing trading.

Continuing professional development

As part of the ongoing development of its staff, NHBC BCS shall maintain suitable arrangements for Continuing professional development and in-service training.

Review of performance

NHBC BCS shall collect and monitor evidence of its performance, in terms of service delivery and compliance or non-compliance of building work with the Building Regulations. It shall have procedures in place to learn from its findings as a part of a process of continuous improvement. It shall also facilitate the sharing of any information that would be of benefit to other Building Control Bodies (BCB) in recognising general areas of difficulty (or failure) in achieving compliance.

Management systems

NHBC BCS shall incorporate quality management principles into its service, which can demonstrate that the above Standards are being achieved.

Business ethics

NHBC BCS shall observe the highest professional standards and business ethics expected of service providers. NHBC BCS shall not attempt to supplant a competitor, or win work, on the basis of interpretation of the regulations. The principle of the building control function being independent shall not be compromised.

Complaints procedure

NHBC BCS will operate, maintain and make available, on request, to any interested party, its complaints procedure. Persons dissatisfied with the building control service they receive shall be able to complain and have their complaint dealt with fairly, transparently and in a manner that can be independently audited.

