

IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING STANDARDS

Outcomes from review of the West Lothian Annual Survey carried out January 2021.

Customer Comments / Improvement Initiative (You said)	Progress (We Did)
<p>Getting in touch with an inspector can be very time consuming.</p>	<p>All officers contact details are provided in correspondence sent during the application process, we also have an email address - buildingstandards@westlothian.gov.uk that is monitored throughout the day where, if you do not have the officers or inspectors contact details our Building Standards Technician will provide these or can put you in contact with the case officer.</p>
<p>The " problem " that I have encountered is regarding the structural aspect of applications and NOT the technical standard aspect of the applications. In some applications I require to use the services of a structural engineer and on at least 3 applications we have encountered numerous " differences of opinion " with your in-house structural engineer regarding the submitted calculations and drawings. I know this appears to be one sided however I just know it takes a very long time to obtain a building warrant in W L C where structural calculations are submitted</p>	<p>The applicant has the option to use a SER registered engineer who can certify the structural design, this is a smoother option and speeds up the approval process as we as verifier are not required to assess the structural design. However, where the applicant decides to forego this route and use the other option to submit structural calculations, we use our structural engineer to carry out checks on the information provided to check that it meets the requirements and on occasion further information is requested leading to delays in the approval process.</p>

<p>Unable to send in photos because of the file size</p>	<p>The file size we can accept has now been increased however, staff are also reminded to direct customers wishing to submit photographs to use the e-building standards portal:</p> <p>https://www.ebuildingstandards.scot/eBuildingStandardsClient/default.aspx</p>
<p>Limited ability to contact by phone</p>	<p>Due to the pandemic, initial contact via telephone was erratic, however each staff member updated their voice mail prior to homeworking, providing clear advice to email the case officer with a phone number and the officer would call back – since then staff have remote access to their office phone.</p>
<p>The staff we dealt with were professional and helpful in all their dealings with us during the difficult times re COVID-19.; I appreciated the direct communication we had to discuss and resolve topics.</p>	<p>As a team we will continue to do this.</p> <p>We are very focused on our customer service and our team are aware of the importance of this aspect of their role. The Building Standards team will do all they can to help get a resolution to any issues and appreciate this feedback.</p>