

Service being assessed	Building Control
Who will be involved in completing this assessment?	Grant Scott, Acting Service Manager – Building Control
Date of Review	27 June 2011
Date of Next Review	27 June 2012
What is the purpose of the service?	Delivery of both statutory and non-statutory services including both regulatory and non-regulatory functions for Building Control.
Is this assessment being undertaken because of changes to the service? If so what are they?	Assessment being undertaken as part of Council's annual review of equalities information, not because of change to service/policy.
<p>The purpose of this review is to understand how services can help the Council to meet its duties under Equalities legislation. The duties can be summarised as</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Eliminate discrimination</li> <li>2. Advance equality of opportunity</li> <li>3. Foster good relations between different parts of the community</li> </ol>	<p>The Building Control team is just one of the agencies to offer building control services to the public. This makes them very responsive to customer requests / changes in legislation and policy in order to make them competitive in their market.</p> <p>They can provide alternative language / format information upon request but there has not been a great demand over the past few years. Newsletters, the website, emails and telephone calls are all used to keep their customers up-to-date and to explain the application and charges system. The majority of their customers are builders / agents who they deal with regularly.</p>

<p>How does this service help the Council to do this, in particular in relation to the categories specifically mentioned in legislation - Race, Gender/Sex, Disability, Age, Religion/Belief, Gender Reassignment, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy &amp; Maternity and in respect of Duty 1 only – Marriage and Civil Partnerships?</p>	<p>Visits can be made to applicants who would struggle to come into the Town Hall complex for face-to-face advice. Site visits are carried out anyway as part of the building control process.</p> <p>The Manager works closely with the team to ensure that discrimination is eliminated by addressing any remarks or behaviour which may indicate that anybody may receive less favourable treatment. The work of the team is designed in a way which means that staff are allocated particular sites and work on an individual basis with the applicant. This will mean helping them to address the barriers when building to the regulations and means that solutions are tailored to particular circumstances.</p> <p>A review of the letters sent out to applicants has just been undertaken and plain English substituted for some of the “jargon”.</p> <p>Payments can be made either by personal visit to the Town Hall buildings, through the post or over the telephone.</p>
<p>How will you know that service is working as it should?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comments, compliments and complaints made verbally to the Surveyors.</li> <li>• Progress against national indicators / targets</li> <li>• Compliance with legislation</li> </ul>
<p>What data have you used to help you make this assessment?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indicators, targets, statistics</li> <li>• Number of applications made / reports / information from IT and paper systems</li> <li>• Legislation</li> <li>• Verbal feedback from customers</li> <li>• Verbal feedback from partner agencies such as the Fire Service, Police, Environment Agency, Anglian Water Services etc</li> </ul>

<p>How have you ensured that this service has been designed from a customer's perspective and how have you involved customers in that process?</p>	<p>The Building Control service is responsive to customer feedback / comments and continuously updates its working practices. However it is constrained by corporate systems (telephony / IT / budgets) from making some of the changes / responding to complaints from customers.</p> <p>A customer survey may be undertaken within the next 12 months depending on staff resources to undertake the work.</p>
<p>What is, or what do you expect to be the impact of the way you work on different parts of the community, including those covered by equality legislation?</p>	<p><b>Who benefits?</b> The property owner (safe and legal building) The Borough in the generation of fees and safe built environment</p> <p><b>Who should be expected to benefit but don't – Why not?</b> Not applicable.</p>
<p>On the basis of what you have found out, which of these options will you now follow</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>No major changes</b></li> <li>• Adjust the policy</li> <li>• Continue the policy</li> <li>• Stop and remove the policy</li> </ul> <p>This is a review – not a new policy or service. As and when it is proposed to change the service or policies, new assessments will be completed.</p>
<p>Signed off by</p>	<p>Grant Scott, Acting Service Manager – Building Control</p>