



Lambeth
Building Control

Getting the builders in?

A guide to building regulations approval



If you're planning building work at home or at work, you need to make sure it complies with minimum standards set by law, which is where Lambeth Building Control can help.

What are building regulations?

Building regulations exist to ensure the health and safety of people in and around all types of buildings – domestic, commercial and industrial. They also provide for energy conservation, and for access and facilities for disabled people.

This leaflet explains what you need to do to make sure your building work complies with building regulations.

Building work at home

You must apply for, and get, building regulations approval before you start work.

Contact Lambeth Planning first on 020 7926 1180 to see if you also need planning permission.

Building regulations approval and planning permission are completely different. If you apply for planning permission, you still need to check with us that your work meets building regulations.

To apply for building regulations approval you need to complete a building notice or full plans application form. Which of these applications you choose depends on the scale and type of work involved – please contact us for advice. You can get an application form by either:

- phoning us on 020 7926 9000
- visiting our office (address on back page)

- visiting our website at www.lambeth.gov.uk, or
- sending us an email - buildingcontrol@lambeth.gov.uk.

You can also complete and submit your application online at www.submit-a-plan.com (payment currently still has to be made by cheque, in person or sent through the post).

If you are planning to change your home into any type of commercial property, you must submit a full plans application - details are on page 4.

There is a charge for both building notice and full plans applications – please refer to our fee sheet for details or call us on 020 7926 9000. The fee must be sent in with your application.

Please read the notes on the form and follow the advice and guidance. Within three working days of receiving your building notice or full plans application, we will send you a letter to confirm whether we can process it. You can then arrange the first inspection with our surveyor. You must do this at least two days before the work is due to begin.

Whatever type of application you make we will inspect the work in stages while it is being carried out. We will give building regulations approval when the work has been finished to meet the requirements of the regulations.

You don't need building regulations for:

- A** boundary walls and fences.

You still need to ensure that these works are carried out safely to avoid accidents.

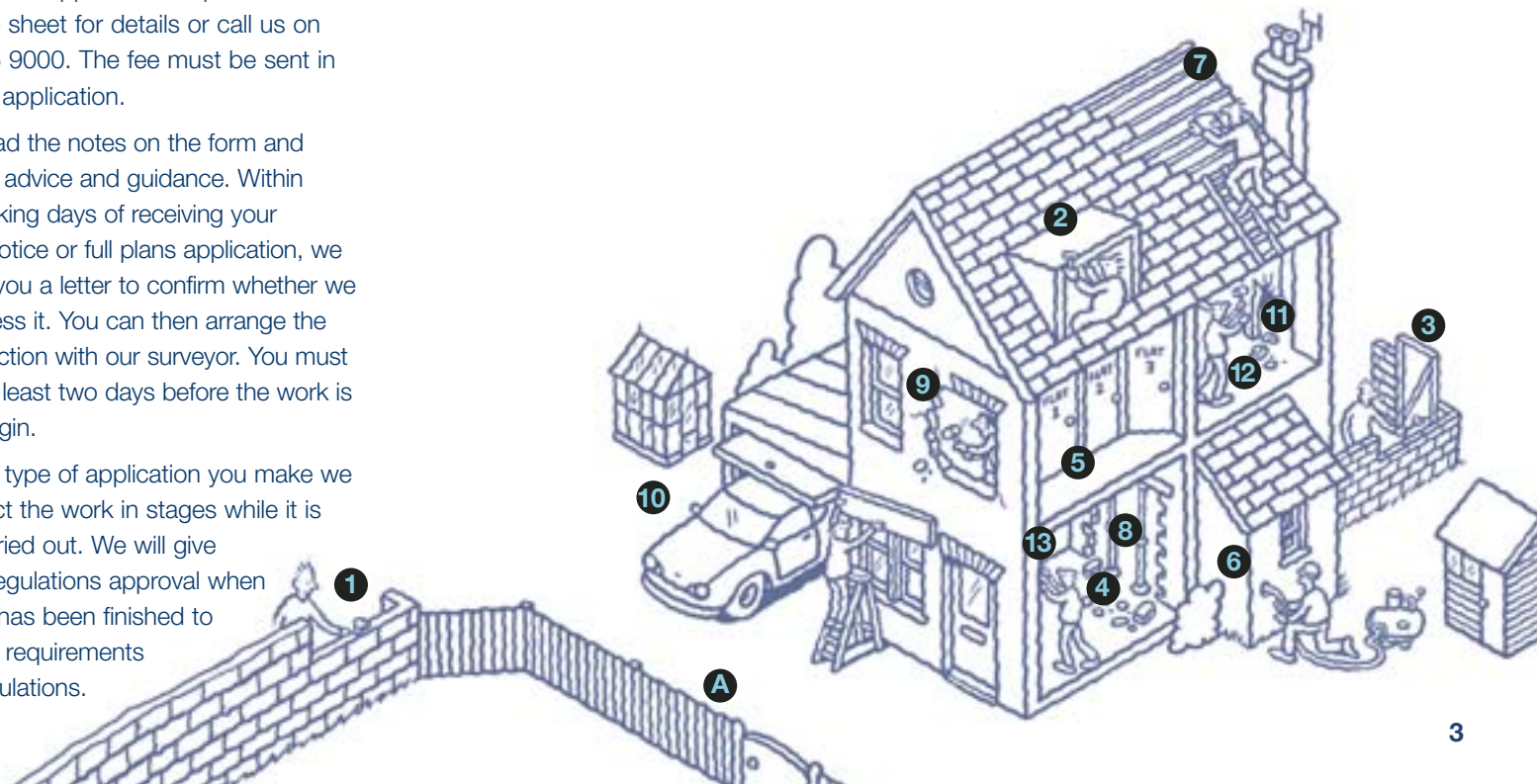
You also need to recognise that some of these works could have implications for adjacent properties, whether they need approval or not.

Out of courtesy, you should tell your neighbours about any work you're planning to carry out – although they don't have a right under building regulations to object to the works.

We are always happy to clarify if your work is exempt. Please contact us before you start work.

You need building regulations approval for:

- 1** building a new property or extension
- 2** a loft conversion
- 3** replacing a boiler, windows, doors, etc
- 4** creating a through-lounge
- 5** converting a building into separate units
- 6** insulating a cavity wall
- 7** re-covering a roof
- 8** removing internal walls
- 9** making doorways and windows larger
- 10** building a garage
- 11** removing a chimney breast
- 12** creating a new bath/shower room
- 13** installing new electrical cabling
- 14** most electrical work.



Jargon-buster

Building notice: application for approval for building work on domestic properties – normally used for small, uncomplicated works.

Full plans: application for approval for building work on commercial or domestic properties – can be used for all types of building work.

Building regulations: laws setting out the minimum standard for domestic, commercial and industrial building work.

Completion certificate: issued to acknowledge that all works comply with building regulations and all fees have been paid.

Lambeth Building Control: department which ensures all building work in Lambeth complies with the minimum standards set out in building regulations.

Lambeth Planning: department which ensures that buildings comply with planning law, and work in conservation areas and on listed buildings complies with the law.

Planning permission: formal approval for plans involving a change of use (e.g., from a record shop to a restaurant), or a physical change to the home or office.

Regularisation: means of getting approval for unauthorised work completed after November 1985.

What happens once the work is finished?

When the work is finished, by law you must arrange for our surveyor to carry out a final inspection.

Our surveyor will make sure that all the paperwork is complete, and that all the work complies with building regulations. All the fees must have been paid too, otherwise a completion certificate will not be issued.

The completion certificate will only be sent out to you if you request it and there is a charge. You will need to send us the fee for it before it is sent out to you.

The certificate will be useful for you to have in the future, particularly if you decide to sell your house or flat. It is also a good way of making sure that your builders have done all the necessary work to meet the regulations before you pay their bill.

There are no fees for any work relating to specific disabled needs, for example, ramp access or a disabled toilet.

Building work on commercial properties

Check if you require planning permission with Lambeth Planning. This is very important as, although you have to comply with building regulations, you may also require planning permission.

Building regulations and planning permission are completely different. If you apply for planning permission, you still need to check with Lambeth Building Control that your work satisfies building regulations.

You must send in your application before you begin any work. **All commercial properties must submit full plans.**

Ideally full plans should be sent at least five weeks before the work is due to start. We will check the plans and issue a decision to you before you start the work.

You would normally need to send in two sets of plans – we'll use these to check and consult with other authorities in the borough, for example, fire and water authorities.

In some cases, we will need more copies of the plans, but we'll let you know if this is the case.

If your plans meet building regulations, we'll issue you with an approval notice within five weeks – you are advised to wait for this before you start work.

If your plans are rejected you may submit another set for us to review, and you have a right to appeal. If you re-submit revised plans for the same work within three months (known as a re-submission of plans), you will not have to pay the application charge again. After this time you will need to pay another charge.

What happens once the work starts?

Tell us in writing at least two days before you start any work - we will send you a pre-printed 'commencement notice' that you can use to make it easier for you to let us know. Further inspection will also be required - our surveyor will discuss this when he/she meets your builder.

What happens once the work is finished?

By law you need to arrange a final inspection with our surveyor.

Our surveyor will make sure that all the paperwork is complete, and that all the works comply with building regulations. All the fees must have been paid too, otherwise a completion certificate will not be issued.

There is no charge for the first copy of a completion certificate for full plans. If duplicate certificates are needed, we will charge you for them.

Our service standards

We will:

- send an engineer or surveyor to inspect dangerous structures within two hours of being notified
- acknowledge receipt of building notice and full plans applications within two days
- issue a decision on full plans within five weeks
- aim to carry out site inspections on the following day, or the same day whenever possible.

What happens if I do work without applying for approval?

You're required by law to make an application before you begin work.

If you fail to comply with building regulations, we'll serve you with an enforcement notice and take legal action. There are penalties for breaking building regulations – if prosecuted, you could be faced with a fine of up to £5,000, plus £50 for each day after the conviction that the work is not put right.

What if unauthorised work has been carried out in the past?

You're responsible for making sure that any work carried out before you bought a property meets building regulations approval: make sure you're shown any completion certificates.

If the previous owner didn't get building regulations approval, you can still apply to cover the work that was carried out before you bought the property (only if the work was carried out after 11 November 1985). It may be necessary to uncover some of the work to conduct a proper inspection and additional work may be needed to make sure that it conforms with the requirements. A charge is payable at the time of your application. Details are available on request.

How we can help you

- We offer comprehensive, impartial advice and have a wide knowledge of the borough.
- We can let you know if your work needs building regulations approval.
- We can advise you on how to comply with the regulations.
- We'll help you fill in your forms.
- We'll discuss your plans with you before you pay any fees.
- We approve plans.
- We'll inspect work at various stages, depending on the work. When the work is finished, we'll make sure it's safe.

How you can help us

There's a few things that you can do to help us process your application quickly.

- Provide any information that we ask for.
- Make sure that you fill in your application form completely, providing all the information requested. If you don't sign the form and enclose your cheque, we'll return your application without processing it.
- State clearly on the form what the planned work is.
- If a reference number has been given to you, please quote this on all correspondence with us, whether it's by telephone, letter or email. It will help us to locate your application quickly and accurately.
- Give us plenty of notice if you need us to carry out an inspection.

Other services we provide

- We offer advice on access and facilities for disabled people.
- We issue licences for special and temporary structures to ensure they are designed, constructed and maintained safely, for example, marquees, flag poles and advertising boards.
- We'll check fire escapes for special one-off events.
- We offer a 24-hour service for reporting dangerous structures. If you notice a building or structure that appears to be in a dangerous condition, or in serious neglect, an engineer will inspect the problem and take the necessary action. If the structure is unsafe, but there is no immediate danger, then the owner will be contacted to make it safe – if they don't, they may face enforcement action.
- Building regulations require that any works take into account energy efficiency – call 020 7926 9000 to request a free copy of our leaflet on environmentally friendly building works - 'Building for the future'.

Useful contacts

Lambeth Planning
Tel: 020 7926 1180

Department for Communities and Local Government

Administers building control legislation.
Tel: 020 7944 4400
www.communities.gov.uk

Glass and Glazing Federation

For approved double-glazing companies.
Tel: 0870 780 2028
www.fensa.org.uk

LABC

National local authority information centre on building control
Tel: 020 7641 8737
www.labc-services.co.uk

www.submit-a-plan.com

Facility that allows you to submit plans and applications over the web.

Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors

Tel: 0870 333 1600
www.rics.org

Association of Building Engineers

Tel: 01604 404 121
www.abe.org.uk

Corgi

The council for registered gas installers.
Tel: 0870 401 2200
www.corgi-gas.com

Spanish

Si desea esta información en otro idioma, rogamos nos llame al 020 7926 9000

Portuguese

Se desejar esta informação noutro idioma é favor telefonar para 020 7926 9000

French

Si vous souhaitez ces informations dans une autre langue veuillez nous contacter au 020 7926 9000

Bengali

এই তথ্য অন্য কোনো ভাষায় আপনার প্রয়োজন হলে অনুগ্রহ করে ফোন করুন 020 7926 9000

Twi

Se wope saa nkaeboy yi wo kasa toforo mu a fre 020 7926 9000

Yoruba

Tí ẹ ba ẹ imoràn yíi, ní èdè Òmíràn, ẹjò, ẹ kàn wà l'ágogo 020 7926 9000

If you would like this information in large print, braille, audio tape or another language please contact 020 7926 9000

Our customer care standards

Lambeth Council staff aim to look after you whenever you need our help.

- **When you phone us**, we'll answer within five rings. If you choose to leave a message, we'll return your call by the next working day.
- **When you send us a letter, fax or email**, you'll receive a full response within ten working days. If we can't reply in full by then, we'll let you know why and when you can expect a full response.
- **When you speak to us**, we will give our name. We'll be polite and courteous, treat you with respect, and offer you help.
- **If you have a complaint**, we will try to resolve it for you. If you are unhappy with our response we can send you information on Lambeth Council's formal complaints procedure.

Lambeth Building Control

London Borough of Lambeth
Phoenix House, 10 Wandsworth Road
London SW8 2LL

Tel: 020 7926 9000 (this is our call centre number - select option 5 for Building Control)

Fax: 020 7926 1155

Email: buildingcontrol@lambeth.gov.uk

www.lambeth.gov.uk

Reception opening hours:

Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4.30pm

