

What Is Building Control?

Building Control is about ensuring high standards in construction work and protecting the health and safety of people who will use an environment following completion of the work.

It also ensures that the requirements of people with varying needs, disabilities for example, are met and so the possibility for discrimination is reduced.

Who Is Affected By The Building Regulations?

Every type of commercial and public organization wanting to carry out building or refurbishment work, or even simple internal alterations will have to conform with Building Regulations and secure approval from the Local Building Control Officer.

Building Regulations are statutory and non-conformance can result in prosecution, should an incident arise, by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). In addition both your Public Liability and Contents insurance schemes are unlikely to accept a claim where injury or damage can be attributed to building works insufficiently installed to prevent or contain such an incident.

How Do I Comply?

A member of the Local Authority Building Control (LABC) scheme, the Local Authority Building Control Office or a regulated specialist can review your plans and advise on whether your intended works require Building Control approval.

Where they do a full plans application (typical submission but there are variations) involves providing details of the intended works, its scope, specifications of new materials/constructions and detailed layout drawings. These generally demonstrate both the existing condition of the site and intended layouts.

The application should be submitted prior to works commencing on site, giving ample time for any of the Building Control Officer's comments to be addressed. Once any issues are resolved the revised specifications and drawings receive Building Control approval and construction can commence.

In all cases at least one site inspection, by the local Building Control Officer, takes place to ensure that works have been completed in accordance with the approved specifications/drawings.

Substandard work, or work not completed in accordance with the approved specifications/drawings, or an agreed amendment, will have to be removed and reinstated correctly.

The potential risks of taking short cuts and avoiding the process of involving Building Control can be, ultimately, very expensive. It can also create dangerous circumstances with inappropriate or substandard works having taken place.

We recommend that any organization undertaken building or refurbishment works, even small internal alterations, engages a competent company to liaise with Building Control on their behalf, and at the earliest possible stage.

Who Can Help?

Office Changes Ltd has the experience and knowledge to correctly advise on all Building Control matters, incorporating them into the designs/layouts so that approval is secured quickly and effectively. Alternatively we can carry out the entire procedure on your behalf ensuring you avoid common pitfalls, unnecessary time delays and unforeseen costs.