

Winter | 2016

Development Services Newsletter



Planning News

Unauthorised Advertisements

2015 saw a marked increase in unauthorised advertisements within the Borough, particularly along the main highways and around various junctions. Whilst some of these are of a temporary nature such as the advertising of charitable events, many are of a long standing nature giving details of local businesses. Such adverts are damaging to the appearance of the locality and can be construed as a danger to highway safety if located at a junction as drivers may take their eyes off the road as they attempt to read the advert.

Consequently, the Authority is to undertake a programme of enforcing the legislation found in the 2007 Town & Country Planning (Control of Advertisement) Regulations. In order to strike a balance between the needs of businesses and the issues of local amenity and road safety, it is our intention to apply an initial "light touch" through using a negotiated process to encourage voluntary removal of the adverts.

The Authorities enforcement officers will undertake an assessment of instances of illegal displays, and offer an initial amnesty to allow owners to remove the signs. Should voluntary action not secure removal of the signs, then the Authority has the option of taking formal proceedings. This could include the removal of items by contractors followed by temporary



storage and eventual disposal, and the subsequent recovery of all costs incurred by the Authority from the offender. Ultimately the unauthorised display of an advert is an offence for which the advertiser and the land owner can be prosecuted in court. This will be considered as a last resort, but will not be ruled out in the case of non cooperation by offenders.

Building Control News

Proposed Part R of the Building Regulations Electronic Communications

Towards the end of last year government launched a consultation document for a new Part R which seeks to transpose the European requirement for in-building infrastructure into the UK system of Building Regulations.

This consultation will inform the approach that the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) will take to implement Article 8 of the 2014 Broadband Cost Reduction Directive that requires all new buildings and major renovations to have in-building physical infrastructure which supports connections to superfast broadband. DCLG is planning to meet this requirement by introducing a new 'Requirement R1 – In-Building Physical Infrastructure' to the Building Regulations. The consultation closed on 11 January 2016.

The rules on domestic smoke alarms

Most properties in the UK have battery-operated smoke alarms, but mains-wired smoke alarms interlinked between floors are the most reliable method of giving early warning in case of fire and must now be installed in all new homes.

Mains-wired smoke alarms are also required in certain types of alteration and extension work. Mount them in the circulation space at every floor level:

- ◆ In loft conversions
- ◆ When adding new habitable rooms (bedrooms, kitchens, living or dining rooms) above ground floor level
- ◆ When adding a new habitable room at ground floor level that doesn't have its own exit leading outdoors



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Installing new interlinked smoke alarms can be disruptive, so think about the need for detection before you start work. Radio-linked alarms are acceptable; as long as the manufacturer can guarantee the battery back-up will last for 72 hours.

DO:

- ◆ Ensure there's at least one alarm on every storey of the dwelling
- ◆ Ensure there's an alarm within 7.5m of the door to every habitable room
- ◆ Provide a heat detector to the kitchen if it's open plan to the escape route
- ◆ Mount them 300mm away from walls and light fittings
- ◆ Ensure the electrical installation of the units meets Part P requirements
- ◆ Provide instructions to the end user

DON'T:

- ◆ Install them above staircases where testing and maintenance is dangerous
- ◆ Site them in places where they can become very hot, cold, or subject to a lot of moisture or fumes (bathrooms, kitchens, garages - use a heat detector if need be)
- ◆ Remember, there are additional requirements for large houses of two or more storeys where one of those storeys exceeds 200m², so bear this in mind when working on footballers' mansions! If in any doubt, contact your local authority building control team to discuss.

Building in cold weather Best practice guidance

Concreting

Take care when working with concrete in cold weather. If concrete cools too much below freezing it will become unfit for use. This is because the water in the concrete freezes and expands. This causes micro-cracking making it weak and not usable.

To avoid this happening the concrete needs to gain an initial strength while being kept warm. The concrete needs to be maintained at or above 5°C for the first 48 hours.

A concrete plant may be able to supply heated concrete. Ideally this should be supplied at a temperature of at least 10°C. Check that when the concrete arrives on site the temperature is still above 5°C. The surfaces to be concreted must be free of ice and frost. The concrete needs to be kept warm after it has been placed.

Mineral wool quilts or foam mats are good at helping to keep the exposed concrete warm. These must be used when the temperature drops below freezing. Polythene sheets do not have any insulation value, but they create an air gap that can help maintain the concrete temperature, and these are normally adequate when placing trench foundations.

It is also possible to speed up the hardening time of the concrete, and this will reduce the amount of time the concrete needs to be kept warm. This can be achieved by increasing the amount of cement in the concrete, increasing the strength of the concrete, or by using admixtures.

Masonry

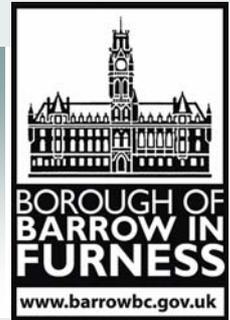
Bricklaying should not be carried out when the temperature drops below 3°C or when frost is imminent. When starting work after an overnight frost, check that the partially completed brickwork is above freezing point. If the brickwork is frozen the mortar bed will freeze and no bond will form.

Mortar can be made more frost resistant by increasing its strength. The use of an accelerator, such as anti-freeze is not recommended.



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This is because the amount of cement relative to the amount of brickwork is relatively small, and the amount of heat generated is low and is not enough to keep the brickwork warm. Air entrained mortars can give some frost resistance, but always follow the manufacturers instructions on use.



Excess of water in materials is a problem when working in cold weather. Keep bricks covered to protect from rain or snow, and stacked clear of ground water. Keep sand and lime dry.

Cover the top of the wall to give protection in cold weather. Hessian can be used to insulate, but this must be kept dry by a polythene sheet. If Hessian becomes wet it can cause staining and efflorescence. Allow the brickwork to dry out by leaving an air gap between the cover and the wall. Secure the cover to prevent them being dislodged by wind.

Local Land Charges News

The Local Land Charges Section recently held an Information and Training event in November for the local solicitors within the Furness area. The event proved beneficial to everyone, it was helpful to receive the feedback and some enhancements to the service have already been implemented.

We now add to the following information into Con 29 Part 1 Box C on your behalf. All roads and rear roads, streets and footpaths leading to and from the property.

The radon answer now includes the percentage figure for all searches.

We are commencing work on the new back office for land charges in the New Year, this will allow us to share progress and be more efficient we will update you more on this later.

We are looking to make greater use of our fileshare system to send back search responses starting in the New Year. This allows us to send you a link to a secure location on the internet where you can download your search responses. We will keep the past four weeks

responses on for each solicitor, so if you need to get hold of the information again it will be there for you.

We still have the following items to implement that we also agreed to action

Provide more information within the competent persons question on the CON 29

Hold a meeting with Cumbria County Council (Waiting for response).

VAT

The implementation of VAT on Con29 elements was meant to be implemented on the 1st February 2016. We received a message on 29th January that the implementation has been put on hold for a short period of time. We will let you know as soon as we are informed of a new date.

Below are our new charges that will apply from April 2016, these currently do not include VAT. As soon as we have been given an implementation date for V.A.T. we will resend the charges to you. The main change has been the lowering of a full domestic search and a new commercial search fee which is higher.

Domestic

LLC1	£36.00
CON29 Part 1	£60.00
Full Search	£96.00

Commercial

LLC1	£47.00
CON29 Part 1	£78.00
Full Search	£125.00
Parcel of Land LLC only	£2.00
Parcel of Land Con 29 Only	£19.00
Parcel of Land Full Search	£21.00
CON 29 Part II optional	£12.00
CON 29 Part II Q22	£23.00