Planning and Building Control Charter

A GUIDE TO OUR SERVICES

Introduction

This Charter should be read in conjunction with the Corporate Customer Care Charter, which has adopted the general priorities for customer care. This Charter builds upon those priorities and addresses the specific issues applicable to the planning office by promoting good planning practice and aiming to ensure that we meet your expectations, wherever possible in the service we deliver. It supports the Council's aim to provide 'consistently high quality services and community involvement.'

This Charter is our commitment to you. To keep things simple the Charter does not explain procedures in detail, it is a list of what you can expect from the planning office when you communicate with us.

As an open council

We will endeavour:

- Ensure that everyone is treated in a manner which is fair and equitable, which respects their age, economic or social background, gender, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion and beliefs, cultural values, race or ethnic background and way of life in accordance with the Council's Comprehensive Equality Policy, equalities legislation and reflects the Council's commitment to social cohesion.
- Where the law allows, make information and documents available for everyone although 24 hrs advance notice may be required for some documents, (there will be a cost for providing copies)
- Make sure the Planning Office is as accessible as practicable. If you have problems visiting us then we will try our best to arrange other means of allowing you to view the information you require. For example if you are ill or unable to travel. (Call 01722 434541 for further help).
- Provide an up to date planning website to provide a first point of contact for all services at www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning
- Welcome suggestions on how we can improve our services.

WHAT SERVICES DO WE PROVIDE?

We provide five main services:

- **Development Control** -Dealing with planning, listed building applications, applications for works to trees and appeals against refusal of such applications. Providing advice on whether planning permission is required. Providing advice before an application is submitted. Providing general planning advice and guidance.
- **Building Control** Ensuring buildings meet national standards for energy efficiency and health and safety. Dealing with dangerous structures, street naming and numbering
- **Enforcement** Investigation of alleged breaches of planning control, Listed Buildings, Advertisements and Tree legislation. Taking appropriate action against unauthorised development, checking compliance with approved plans, ensuring conditions and planning obligations are complied with.

- **Conservation** Protecting the built heritage, giving advice and considering applications for works to listed buildings and/or within conservation areas.
- **Forward Planning** Preparing strategies and policies to guide development in order to safeguard our environment and to provide viable, vibrant and sustainable communities, well into the future.

We provide a single point of contact for all these services at 61 Wyndham Road, Salisbury, SP1 3 AH from 9.00 – 5.00 pm Monday – Friday.

This charter sets out what you can reasonably expect for each service:

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Pre-application Advice

We welcome and encourage you to discuss your planning proposals with us before you submit a formal application. This will help identify:

- Who else you may need to seek advice from before submitting your application
- What information you need to submit with the application
- What the most relevant policies are and whether your proposal complies with them.

We will give an opinion on:

- Whether or not you will require planning permission, by letter, email or in person if, you provide us with sufficient details.
- Provide a written response to any development proposals you submit to us in writing at pre-application stage including providing general design guidance free of charge in accordance with the council's design guide 'Creating Places'. Please note that this will be an opinion of an officer of the council and is without prejudice to any formal decision taken should a planning application be registered.
- Provide you with a form to fill in which will help you summarise your proposal and which we can complete to give you a written record of the advice you have been given.
- Provide a duty officer during office hours to provide general planning advice and to arrange future appointments to discuss site-specific proposals, with an appropriate officer, although in these circumstances you will need to ensure adequate information, to include a design statement where appropriate, has been submitted beforehand to enable some preparatory work to be undertaken.
- Try our best to advise on the different consents you may require.
- Provide you with the relevant forms and guidance notes and give general advice about the application process.

Planning Application

When you make an application for planning permission, the Council has a duty to you and to those affected by the proposal.

We will endeavour to:

Acknowledge receipt and register your application within 3 working days.

- If it is complete.
- If your application cannot be registered we will advise you what additional information is needed—however please note: if we do not receive the required information within 14 days we reserve the right to return your application.
- Give you the name of your case officer and a contact telephone number.
- Make every effort to reach a decision within the appropriate statutory time frames.
- Provide a summary of information on the progress of the application on the planning web site,
- Allow you to view consultation/third party representations received on applications. Publicise your proposal, either by a notice posted on or near to the site and or by letter to immediately adjoining properties. The choice of method may change depending on the type of application. In some cases, where it is statutorily required we will place a formal notice in the local press.
- Notify you or your agent, (if nominated), if the application has to be heard by a committee and advise you of your rights to speak at the meeting.

We will endeavour to:

- Publish all current and recent planning applications received since 2004 on our website http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning
- In addition, we will send a weekly list to the local press of all planning applications received, to be published at the discretion of the newspaper.

If you comment upon an application

We will:

- Take your comments into account when making a decision,
- If the application upon which you have commented in writing is to be considered by a committee, we will, provided we have received your letter 10 working days before the date of the meeting, notify you of the date, time and venue and advise you of your rights to speak at the meeting.

You can track the progress of any planning application, on the website and a copy of the decision notice (since 2004) and officers report, (since 2006), will be published once the application has been determined.

BUILDING CONTROL

We have a team of building surveyors who work to ensure that building works are carried out to national standards. Our Building Control service is based on the following commitments.

We will endeavour to:

- Strive to ensure all building regulation applications are determined within 8 weeks.
- Avoid rejecting plans if they don't comply with the Building Regulations without first explaining how they can be amended.
- Register all applications within 48 hours of receipt.
- Acknowledge all applications and correspondence within 48 hours.
- Use our best efforts to respond to requests for inspection within 24 hours.
- Ensure all works comply with current Building Regulations.

- Ensure all necessary action is taken when notified of a dangerous structure.
- Respond to all notices of demolition within 10 days to ensure health and safety.
- Name new streets in the district through full consultation so that they reflect local opinion, where appropriate.
- Respond to requests to re-name existing properties within 10 working days.

ENFORCEMENT

If you wish to advise us about an alleged unauthorised development we will investigate and where expedient in the public interest take enforcement action against unauthorised building works or use of land. This action will depend upon the individual circumstances of the case.

We will endeavour to:

- Ensure all enforcement enquiries received are registered within 24 hours;
- Ensure that sites requiring inspection are visited within the time scales identified within the adopted Enforcement Policy report.
- Ensure all enforcement enquiries are acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt;
- Keep enquirers informed on the progress of the case and by week 13 following receipt of the enquiry, to have completed the investigation or if not to explain, in writing, why the investigation is taking longer. Where we cannot address a matter, we will explain why;
- Ensure that all recent/ongoing enquiries are treated in confidence;
- Advise that submission of a retrospective application is without prejudice to the final decision the Council may make;
- Continue prosecutions and enforcement proceedings where there is a retrospective application unless there are good reasons not to do so;
- Not delay formal enforcement proceedings, where initial negotiations have failed to remedy a continuing breach;
- Ensure that planning permissions, conditions and Section 106 Obligations are monitored in accordance with the councils' priorities.
- Work with our internal and external partners on matters of joint concern;
- Pass on enquiries, which fall outside the ambit of planning enforcement, to any relevant service/authority.

FORWARD PLANNING - PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

We have published the statutory 'Salisbury District Local Plan', which explains our land use planning policies in detail. This plan sets out where new development may be allowed and where it may not. The Government advice is that planning applications must be decided in line with these policies unless there is an overriding reason to set them aside. The adopted Local Plan is now being replaced by a new set of Planning Policy documents, collectively known as the Local Development Framework, (LDF)

Our commitment to you...

We will use our best efforts to:

- Ensure that the Salisbury District Local Plan/LDF is kept up to date.
- Ensure that local people help shape the policies in the LDF.
- Provide prompt and clear policy guidance to prospective applicants.
- Provide supplementary planning documents for sensitive or large sites.
- Make sure Local Plans/Local Development Documents are available at all libraries within the District.
- Make as much information available to the public as possible.
- Monitor the implementation of the policies.
- Respond to new pressures by proposing new and / or amended policies.
- Advise on how you may object to proposed policies and inform you of how your views were considered.
- If you call into the planning office Forward Planning and Conservation will aim to see you within 10 minutes, although we do not provide a duty officer. If technical/specialist advice is required, and no member of staff is available, an appointment will be made for you as soon as possible.
- Use a variety of consultation techniques to ensure all sections of the community are engaged.
- Publish all current work, Supplementary Planning Documents and policies on the website.
- Acknowledge comments received during consultation periods.

CONSERVATION

We have a team of conservation specialists committed to preserving and enhancing our historic and architectural heritage.

We will:

- Where resources allow support conservation and enhancement schemes with grant aid.
- Assist local communities to enhance their local environment.
- Provide technical assistance and design guidance upon request.
- Prepare guidance notes and leaflets on all aspects of conservation.
- Consult with local communities and land owners about the designation of new conservation areas.
- Keep an up to date 'buildings at risk' register.
- Provide a single point of contact to your conservation queries by coordinating consultation with national and local agencies and specialists on your behalf.

IDEAS FOR IMPROVING OUR SERVICE

We aim to provide an excellent service, however, if you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive please let us know. In the first instance by writing to the Head of Development Services or Head of Forward Planning & Transportation, either by letter or through the councils e-mail address thecouncil@salisbury.gov.uk, who will ensure your feedback is dealt with by the most appropriate officer.) If you prefer, you can also use the council's feedback procedure. This is called the — Passport to Improved services, and is available on our website:

http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/complaints-leaflet.pdf

Or we can send you a copy

Or you can pick one up from any council reception area.

HOW CAN YOU HELP US?

Please visit the council's website http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning for advice on planning policy, to view planning applications, and for links to other helpful websites giving planning information. This may save you a visit to the planning office. It is also now possible to submit applications on line via the planning portal. If you are about to use any part of our service it would help us enormously if you could carry out the following:

- Read guidance notes carefully (these may be obtained from planning reception, or from the website).
- Take time to fill out any forms correctly, delays can occur if you do not if you are not sure ask us for help.
- Send us all information requested. This may include drawings, photographs, and there may be a fee depending upon the service you are using.
- Please quote our reference and any contact name given to you when writing.
- Please state as clearly as possible which part of the service you require (e.g. enforcement or conservation etc.)
- Where possible phone in advance if you are visiting the Offices to ensure that the information you wish to see is available.
- Try your best to provide additional information we have requested by the time we state, as this will help matters progress as quickly as possible.

HOW DO I USE THESE SERVICES?

On the Internet

Our website is http://www.salisbury.gov.uk/planning for advice on planning policy, to view planning applications, and for links to other helpful websites giving planning information.

In person

At the Planning Office, 61 Wyndham Road, Salisbury.

In writing Salisbury District Council, Planning Office, 61 Wyndham Road, Salisbury SP1 3AH

Telephone

01722 434541 for Planning related enquiries

01722434519/523 for Building Control enquiries

Fax

Development Control & Enforcement 01722 434520

Forward Planning & Conservation 01722 434247

Building Control 01722 434247

Email

Development Control and Enforcement matters

developmentcontrol@salisbury.gov.co.uk

Building Control

buildingcontrol@salisbury.gov.uk

For Conservation and Planning Policy issues

forward planning @salisbury.gov.co.uk