



**Building Standards Annual Report:
Business Plan and Customer Charter**
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Performance Period – 2025-26

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Front cover image – Old Town skyline, Edinburgh

Version Control

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Introduction statement from the Scottish Government

The Building Standards Annual Report: Business Plan & Customer Charter is a strategic planning and management tool that provides information about the local authority building standards service, communicates the vision and strategy and sets out performance against strategic goals and targets.

Building standards verifiers in Scotland are required to utilise the performance report to manage, monitor, review and develop strategies for their business with a focus on the performance framework's core perspectives and cross-cutting themes.



Section 1. Introduction to the Verifier

Verifier Overview

Edinburgh is known throughout the world as a historic city and our nation's capital. Over recent decades, it has built a reputation as a successful and prosperous city – regularly voted as one of the best cities in the world to live in. It attracts more visitors than any UK city outside London and sits in the top 10 cities in the UK for attracting inward investment.

The City of Edinburgh Councils Building Standards service has a major role to play in the contribution of the overall Council commitments. The city is one of the largest Building Standards services in the UK in relation to both the number of building warrant applications processed each year and the fee income received. During the financial year 2025/26, the service received 4297 building warrant and associated applications, covering building construction work with an estimated value of just under £800 million which generated approximately £5 million in building warrant related income fees.

Population

The City of Edinburgh Council's area is home to an estimated 530,680 people.

The Council area includes the City of Edinburgh which contains most of the population, as well as a large rural hinterland. Within the rural area are the towns and villages of South Queensferry, Kirkliston, Newbridge and Ratho. Edinburgh has a rich built heritage with conservation areas covering much of the city. There are two World Heritage Sites: The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh and The Forth Bridge. It is a continuously growing, densely populated city with many flatted residential properties and has a vibrant economy with a mix of employment sectors.

Between 2014 to 2024, Edinburgh's population grew by 9.4% from an estimated 485,270 to an estimated 530,680 people. In the same time period, Scotland's population grew by 4%. Overseas migration continues to be the main driver of population change in Edinburgh. The net effect of births and deaths on Edinburgh's population from 2013 to 2023 was 4,485. The net effect of migration was almost ten times higher at 51,540. In 2024 Edinburgh's population density was 2,015 residents per square kilometre. Cities like Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Manchester and Sheffield have over twice the population density level of Edinburgh. Edinburgh's population increase of 9.4% between 2014 to 2024 was the fifth highest in proportional terms behind Manchester, Bristol, Glasgow and Leeds.

This growth is expected to continue with a projected population of 585,838 by 2047.

Economy

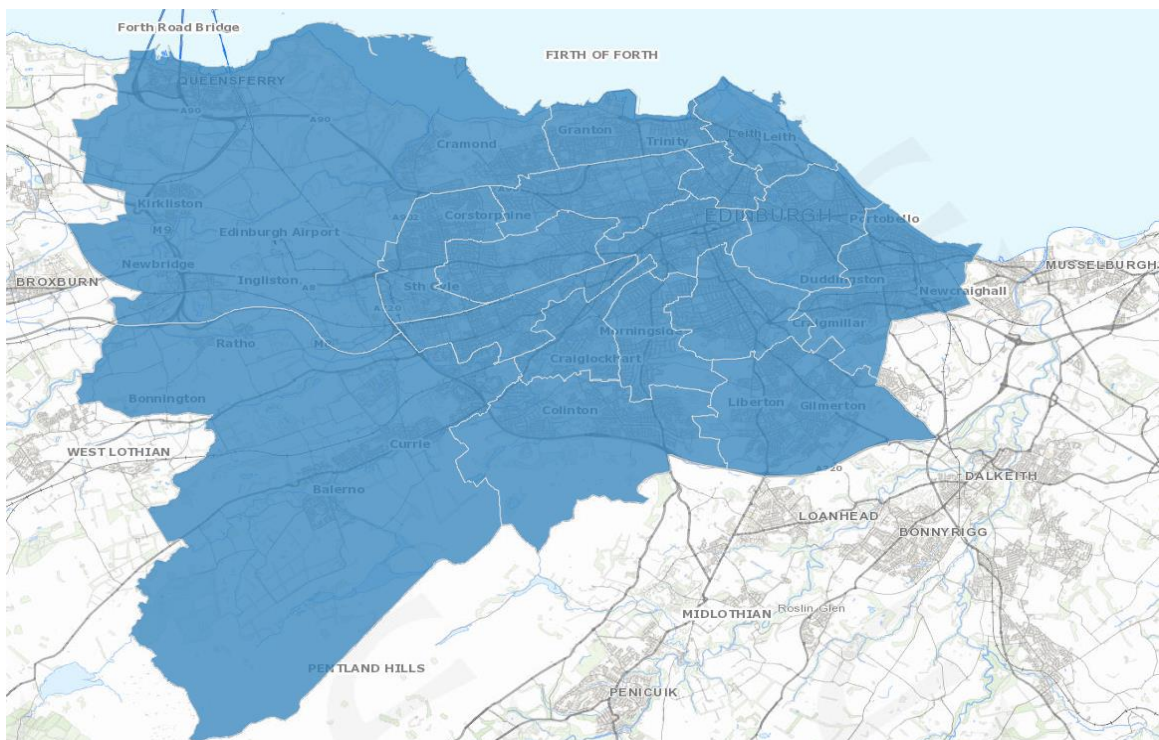
Key employment sectors within the city include health, financial & insurance and education.

People in employment - Industry share

People in employment by industry 2024 Edinburgh, Scotland and average of UK cities				
Industry Sectors	City of Edinburgh		Scotland	UK 8 cities average
		%	%	%
Health	57,000	15.3	16.2	15.8
Financial & insurance	42,000	11.3	3.4	4.6
Education	37,000	9.9	8.3	9.6
Accommodation & food services	36,000	9.7	8.1	7.3
Professional, scientific & technical	34,000	9.1	7.2	10.5
Public administration & defence	26,000	7.0	6.5	6.1
Retail	25,000	6.7	8.1	7.3
Business administration & support services	24,000	6.4	6.4	8.8
Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services	20,000	5.4	4.9	4.1
Information & communication	18,000	4.8	2.7	4.2
Transport & storage	12,000	3.2	4.1	4.4
Construction	11,000	2.9	5.9	3.7
Manufacturing	10,000	2.7	6.9	5.3
Property	8,000	2.1	1.6	2.1
Wholesale	5,000	1.3	2.6	3.3
Motor trades	4,000	1.1	1.7	1.4
Mining, quarrying & utilities	3,500	0.9	2.5	1.1
Agriculture, forestry & fishing	900	0.2	3.1	0.1

In 2024, Edinburgh continued to see an increase in international visits, and these represent almost 50% of the total of international visits in Scotland. The number of international visits to Edinburgh has increased by 10% in the last year. The primary reason for visiting Edinburgh for both domestic (36% of total visits) and international visitors (69%) is to come on holiday. The USA leads in both the number of international visitors to Edinburgh and total spend. However, visitors from Ireland spend the most per night. Germany ranks second for both total nights and total spend. Among domestic visitors, nearly 35% come from London.

Map of Area



(Map showing the extent of the Council's administrative boundary.)

Section 2. Building Standards Verification Service Information

Where to find Building Standards

The Building Standards team along with colleagues in Planning are based on the second floor of the council headquarters at Waverley Court, East Market Street, Edinburgh. This building houses the majority of Council services but has also become a community partner HUB in recent times welcoming partners such as Police Scotland, Scottish Water and Historic Environment Scotland.

Building Standards
The City of Edinburgh Council
Waverley Court
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh
EH8 8BG

Telephone: 0131 529 3550

www.edinburgh.gov.uk/buildingstandards

Overall roles and responsibilities of Building Standards

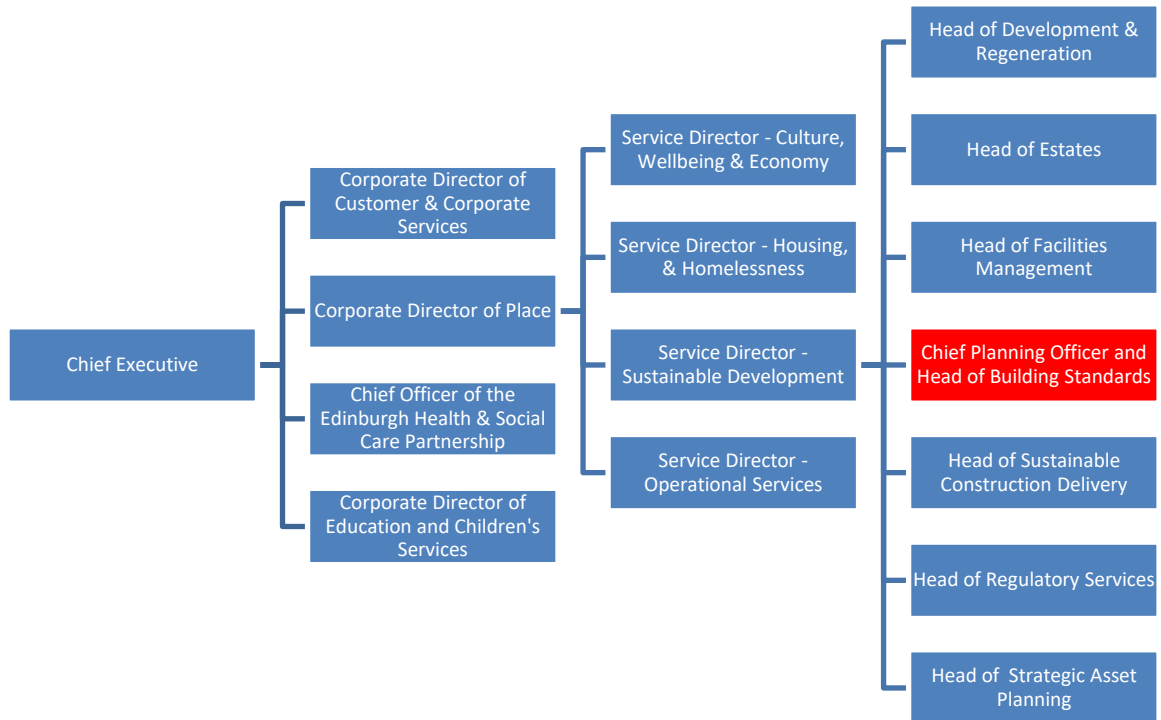
The verification services and functions delivered include:

- Verification of Building Warrants under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003.
- Enforcement in relation to Building Standards matters under the Building (Scotland) Act 2003.
- Consultee to applications in relation to Liquor Licensing under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.
- Providing preliminary advice on the procedures to be followed to obtain building warrant approval, in advance of a formal application.
- Maintaining a public record register of building warrants, completion certificates, enforcement notices and energy performance certificates.
- Work with the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division, to meet the fundamental overarching principles of driving forward the future of building standards throughout Scotland.
- Working collaboratively with the Scottish Building Standards Hub.

The Council's Building Standards service is located within the wider Sustainable Development service (part of the Place Directorate). Other services within Sustainable Development include Planning, Development and Regeneration, Estates, Sustainable Construction Delivery, Regulatory Services, Facilities Management and Strategic Asset Planning. These support a wide range of services to local communities as well as the development industry.

Sustainable Development covers several of the Council's regulatory functions including enforcement, licensing, environmental services and economic growth. The natural synergies across the directorate provide opportunities for collaboration, multi-disciplinary teams, and a high-level, consistent approach across delivery.

City of Edinburgh Council Management Structure



Senior Management within Council	Number of posts (FTE at 31 March 26)	Vacancies (not included in numbers of posts)
Chief Executive	1	
Corporate Director of Place (Tier 2)	1	
Service Director - Sustainable Development (Tier 2)	1	
Chief Planning Officer and Head of Building Standards (Tier 3)	1	
Building Standards Operations Manager (Tier 4)	1	

Note: Tier 1 = Chief Executive; Tier 2 = Director; Tier 3 = Head of Service; Tier 4 = Manager.

Building Standards Team

The service has had its current structure in place since early 2020 which has served the department well through an upturn in performance following previous poor results in Scottish Government audits and through the global pandemic. The current structure gives the benefit of economies of scale which are a necessity against the large number of warrant applications processed on a weekly, monthly and yearly basis. Furthermore, it offers a structured yet flexible framework for the training and continuous development of the junior staff the department has employed over recent years. This recruitment strategy directly addresses the national shortage of fully qualified Building Standards Surveyors.

The Operations Manager is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations within the team which allows the Service Manager to keep oversight of Building Standards but with an increased focus on the management of the Planning Service. The three main verification teams within the service are in turn overseen by a Team Manager. Supplementary staff including improvement, administrative support and ICT support report directly to the Operations Manager. The Service Manager, Operations Manager and Team Managers make up the Building Standards Management Team.

The department is split into 4 key areas:

- Site Inspection/Compliance (all applications up to £250k)
- Plan Reporting (all applications up to £250k)
- Major Applications (all applications £250k and above)
- Improvement and Support Team

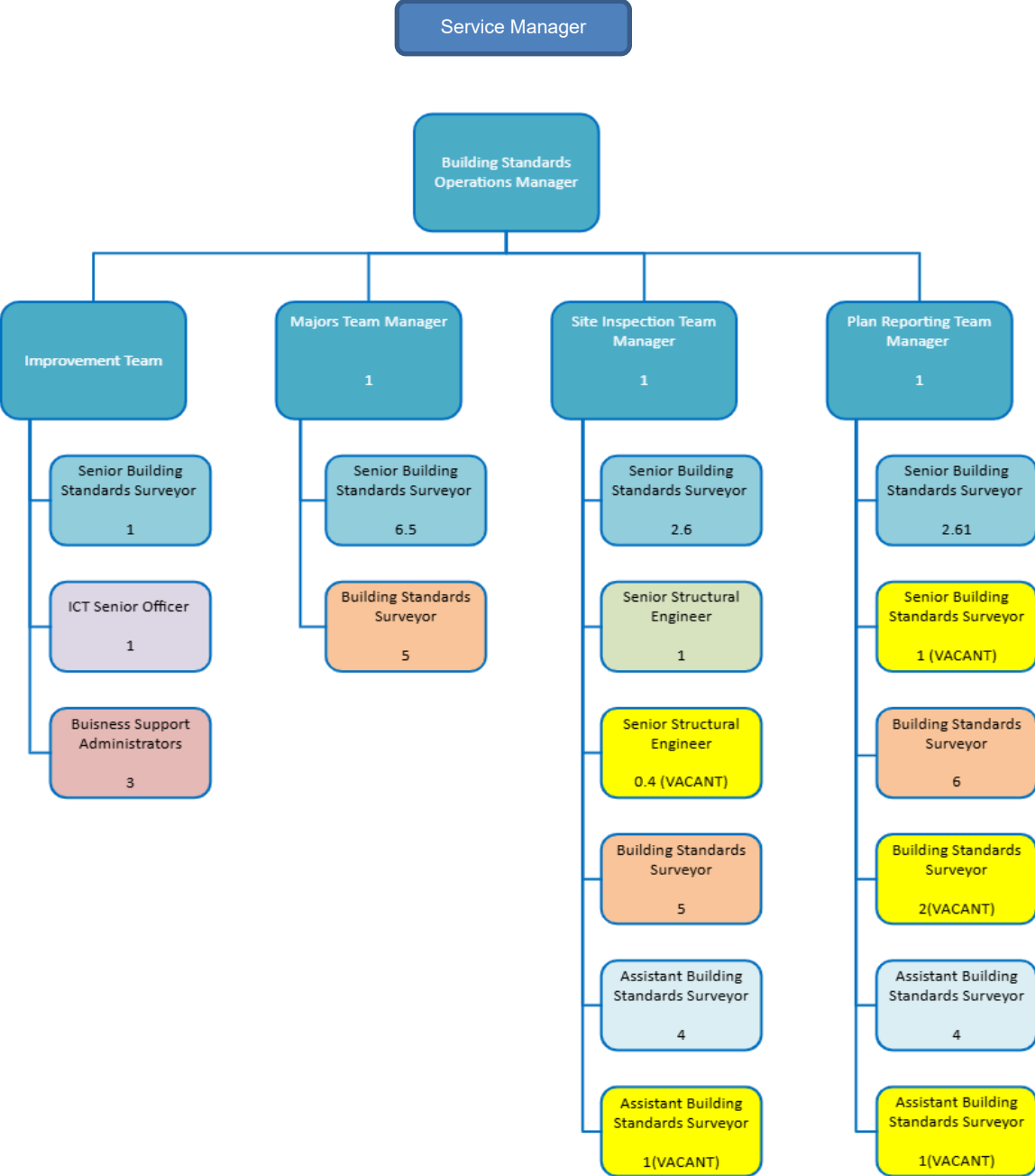
The indications continue to show that the structure is successful and fit for purpose. Sustained high performance and an ever-increasing customer satisfaction rating show this. However, a recent change over the last year saw the introduction of more cross working between the teams, which allowed the opportunity for more shadowing and mentoring which has been highly effective. There are weekly reviews with the Management Team and subsequent reviews with the Team Managers and their own teams.

The Improvement Team has become a permanent feature within the service (using resource from the current budget envelope). Ensuring improvements are sustained and continuous progress is embedded are priorities. The Improvement Team share tools/techniques with colleagues across the Planning Service and other areas within the Place directorate.

Transactions Team

The efficient and effective delivery of the building standards service relies heavily on input from the Council's Transactions team. Whilst the line management responsibilities for this team sit out with the direct control of Building Standards management, the team are included in all team briefings, training, and improvement initiatives.

Building Standards Organisational Structure



Building Standards Staff Profile

Building Standards Full Time Equivalent Posts	Number of posts (FTE at 31 Mar 25)	Vacancies (not included in no. of posts)
Head of Building Standards (Tier 3)	1	
Operations Manager	1	
Team Managers	3	
Senior Building Standards Surveyors	13	1
Senior Structural Engineers	1	0.4
Building Standards Surveyors	16	2
Assistant Building Standards Surveyors	8	2
ICT Senior Officer	1	
Business Support Administrators	3	
Total employees (FTE within service area)	47	5.4

Staff age profile (at 31 Mar 25)	Number of posts
61 and over	5
56 - 60	6
50 - 55	5
40 - 49	14
30 - 39	11
25 - 29	8
16 - 24	3

It is evident from the table above that our age profile is continuing to change for the better. It is more resilient and our succession planning for a more sustainable service is developing well. Over 40% of our staff are below the age of 40 and over 70% of staff are under the age of 50. We have worked hard over the last few years to adjust this profile, employing and training new inexperienced staff, now resulting in nearly 80% of our workforce having 5+ years' experience within Building Standards.

Public Interest Statement

The purpose of the building standards system is to protect the public interest. The system sets out the essential standards that are required to be met when building work or conversion of a building takes place in order to meet building regulations.

The building standards system checks that proposed building work or conversion of a building meets standards; inspections are limited to a minimal necessary to ensure that legislation is not avoided. The control of work on site is not down to the system but is a matter for contracts and arrangements in place between a builder and client.

Verifiers, appointed by Scottish Ministers are responsible for the independent checking of applications for building warrants to construct or demolish buildings, to provide services, fittings, or equipment in buildings, or for conversions.

Section 3. Strategic Objectives

City of Edinburgh Council Strategic Goals

City of Edinburgh Council have three strategic priorities which shape our work during 2023 to 2027. We will

1. Create good places to live and work in Edinburgh
2. Take all the local actions needed to end poverty in Edinburgh
3. Work to deliver a net zero city by 2030.

Our three priorities are interlinked and interdependent. They connect all the major strategies and Council policies agreed in the past few years, through the shared goals and commitments of the Edinburgh Partnership and towards our long-term ambitions for Edinburgh to be a fair, welcoming, pioneering, and thriving city, as expressed by the 2050 Edinburgh City Vision.

To meet these priorities, our Business Plan identifies the outcomes, objectives, and actions that our services need to deliver in the next few years. The actions will ensure:

1. Core services for people in need of care and support are improved
2. People can access fair work and the support they need to prevent and stay out of poverty and homelessness
3. Edinburgh is a cleaner, better maintained city that we can all be proud of
4. People can access public services locally and digitally in ways that meet their needs and expectations and contribute to a greener net zero city
5. People have decent, energy efficient, climate proofed homes they can afford to live in
6. Attainment, achievement, and positive destinations are improved for all with a particular focus on those in poverty
7. People use decarbonised public transport and active travel as the first choice way to get round the city
8. Edinburgh is a climate adapted city, with biodiverse green spaces, and cheaper cleaner networks for energy use
9. Edinburgh has a stronger, greener, fairer economy and remains a world leading cultural capital, and
10. We have the capacity, skills, and resources to deliver our priorities efficiently, effectively and at lower cost.

Through this outcome framework, our Business Plan is the golden thread linking and driving the priorities for delivery across all our key Council wide strategies and plans.

Vision of the Service

Vision

Our aspiration of the service is to be one of the top performing Building Standards Verifiers in Scotland. We will build a reputation as a great organisation to do business with and to work for.

We strive to improve our service to:

- Deliver an excellent Verification service that fulfils the requirements of Scottish Government Ministers as set out in the Operating Framework,
- Be customer focused, taking account of customers' needs, and deliver best practice in terms of consistency of interpretation and predictability of service,
- Deliver sustained high levels of performance in terms of meeting key performance targets as set out in the Performance Framework,
- Consistently review service delivery practices as required to address any issues identified through national customer surveys, and
- Deliver targeted, cost effective, value for money services that meet operational needs and customer demand.

Departmental issues to be addressed in the coming year

We continue to learn and reflect on our experiences during the last few years to ensure we build on our successes and quickly rectify any shortfalls. There is much to be positive about within the service but still many areas for continuous improvement. This constant drive to be and do better, is matched by our commitment to ensure we are adaptable and flexible to future requirements in an ever shifting regulatory landscape.

Continuing to invest in staff wellbeing

The wellbeing of all our staff will always be a top priority for our Service. We have recognised the importance of face-to-face interactions with colleagues and across teams. Our current hybrid model is working well with regular office attendance and team meetings embedded.

A staff wellbeing annual survey has been introduced with results and trends analysed in full by the management team. Recent surveys have produced positive responses, and a full feedback session is done where staff are informed of results and given the opportunity to discuss and feedback. Further, an annual staff away day for all staff to meet and interact has successfully been implemented and is now a welcome and much anticipated addition to the yearly calendar by staff. This gives staff some time away from the computer to interact and bond with colleagues whilst also giving the opportunity for some key continuous professional development through a range of exciting and interesting seminars.

Staff now have minimum quarterly official check-ins with their team manager, alongside regular informal catch-ups. This ensures regular contact and protected time to fully discuss development opportunities and any issues currently being faced Annual conversations are

also in place to reflect on the previous year's events whilst looking forward to agree a development plan for the year ahead.

Succession Plan

We continue to invest in our succession plan and have successfully attracted new talent into our department in the form of assistant building standards surveyors. This graduate level entry into the department and into the industry has proven hugely successfully but does come with the commitment of significant time and resources to ensure appropriate mentoring alongside carefully structured development frameworks. We have offset this need for greater mentoring by attracting Senior Surveyors with wide industry experience which ensures a healthy balance between junior and senior staff members. The success of this overall recruitment approach is evidenced through a current 50/50 ratio between internal promotion and external candidates. This gives the department a healthy relationship between providing a clear progression pathway for existing staff whilst augmenting the department with new and fresh talent from external sources.

Recruitment is likely to be an ongoing pressure for the department but with targeted staff training and development planned over the coming year, we will continue to build on the strong foundations the department has laid down over previous years.

Explore ICT opportunities

To ensure we remain resilient and able to maintain the delivery of service in a manner that meets the ever-changing expectations of our customers, the department will explore opportunities with our ICT lead officer to investigate the use of products such as Power BI and IDOX Insights.

We will look for opportunities to integrate AI into our business in a considered fashion. The rapid advancement in AI tools presents significant opportunities for innovation, efficiency, and service improvement within the Council. However, these technologies also introduce new risks for consideration, relating to data privacy, ethics, legal compliance, environmental impact and organisational reputation. We will work with our corporate IT partners to seek out opportunities to integrate AI into our current ways of working.

The management team are acutely aware that in a more informed and tech-savvy age, we must ensure we are providing services that are fit for purpose, adaptable and which meet the needs of our customers.

Implement Time Recording system

Working collaboratively with Scottish Government and LABSS, we will look to implement a suitable time recording system. The benefits of time recording as a business activity should allow our department to accurately understand the actual levels of time (resources) taken by our employees across different verification and compliance tasks.

Time recording data will also be reported back to Scottish Government to help assure Scottish Ministers that any increased building warrants fees, result in changes to improve the overall building standards services and in particular strengthens compliance.

Implement the Professional Competency Framework

Working collaboratively with Scottish Government and LABSS, we will look to implement the national Professional Competency Framework whilst ensuring staff are fully supported through each step of the process. The Framework sets out the requirements for the assessment and maintenance of skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours for an individual undertaking a role in the building standards profession.

We will ensure staff receive appropriate training and protected time to complete their portfolio of evidence and support them in their preparation for their peer review interviews. We will ensure we capture all training needs identified and look to embed and integrate the framework into our current department learning and development programme.

Maintaining and improving the competency of our staff will continue to be a key objective for the department.

Building Standards Strategic Objectives

For the forthcoming year, the primary objectives for Building Standards are: -

- To continue to deliver timeous and consistent service to our customers.
- To maintain our current high levels of performance.
- To undertake a series of customer service improvements.
- To ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of our employees.

The role of Building Standards within the Councils strategic goals is to:

- Assist economic growth,
- Support the housing programme following the declaration of a housing emergency
- Help ensure our built environment is protected and enhanced,
- Ensure compliance and resilience across the construction industry,
- Ensure value for money while meeting the needs of our citizens; and,
- Deliver excellent customer service.

Section 4. Key Performance Outcomes and Targets

Introduction

The national verification performance framework is based on three core perspectives:

- Professional Expertise and Technical Processes
- Quality Customer Experience
- Operational and Financial Efficiency

There are also three cross-cutting themes, comprising:

- Public Interest
- Continuous Improvement
- Partnership Working

Summary of Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs)

The table below sets out the current list of KPO's for which targets are set by the Scottish Government.

Professional Competency and Operational Processes	
KPO1	Commit to ensuring first reports, building warrants and amendment to warrants are issued within target timescales.
KPO3	Commit to investing fee income into the workforce to meet performance targets.
Quality Customer Experience	
KPO4	Understand and respond to the customer experience
Financial Integrity	
KPO5	Maintain financial governance
KPO6	Commit to objectives outlined in the Building Standards Annual Report

Summary of National Performance Targets and Measures

KPO1 Targets	
1.1	95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
1.2	90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
KPO3 Measures	
3.1	Workforce: Supply v demand levels (%)
3.2	Overall Performance: KPO Targets met (%)
KPO4 Targets	
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.
KPO5 Targets	
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).
5.2	Building standards verification fee income invested into verification services (%)
KPO6 Targets	
6.1	Building Standards Annual Report published prominently online with version control (reviewed at least annually).
6.2	Building Standards Annual Report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026)

Section 5. Performance Data

KPO1 Targets - Commit to ensuring first reports, building warrants and amendment to warrants are issued within target timescales.

1.1

Quarter of year 2025/26	% of 1 st reports and granting of warrant with no 1 st report within 20 day target
1	93%
2	91%
3	91%
4	91%

The service has maintained a very high level of performance throughout the year whilst facing resourcing and financial challenges. Regular monitoring and re-allocation of work takes place on a daily basis to best use resources and to continually develop and upskill staff in all areas of the job.

1.2

Quarter of year 2025/26	% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days
1	95%
2	91%
3	92%
4	93%

The above figures show that for all four quarters, the department was above the national KPO target. This will remain an ongoing priority for next year as we strive to ensure that the figures remain at as high a level as possible.

KPO3 Targets – Commit to investing fee income into the workforce to meet performance targets.

3.1

LOCAL AUTHORITY WORKFORCE SUPPLY AND DEMAND DIFFERENCE	CURRENT WORKFORCE SUPPLY	WORKFORCE SUPPLY - WORKFORCE DEMAND CURRENT DIFFERENCE	WORKFORCE DEMAND AS % OF WORKFORCE SUPPLY
Category	Number	Number	Percentage
TOTAL	52	-3	-5.8%
Building Standards Manager	4	0	0.0%
Advanced Building Standards Surveyor	14	0	0.0%
Building Standards Surveyor	18	0	0.0%
Assistant Building Standards Surveyor	7	-3	-42.9%
Building Standards Support Officer	3	0	0.0%
Administrator (pooled resource)	4	0	0.0%

3.2	1.1	1.2	3.1	3.2	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1	7.2
	95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).	90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).	National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly).	95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD 'Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers' case responded to by verifier within 5 days.	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).	Details of eBuilding Standards are published prominently on the verifier's website.	75% of each key building warrant related processes being done electronically (Plan checking; BWs and amendments (and plans) issue; Verification during construction; CC acceptance).	Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).	Annual performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. April 2016 – March 2017).
	92.99%	95.05%	Published prominently (with review)	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	7.7	170.41%	Published prominently	4 of 4 done	Published prominently (with review)	Includes all performance data
	90.45%	92.13%	Published prominently (with review)	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	7.7	199.40%	Published prominently	4 of 4 done	Published prominently (with review)	Includes all performance data
	91.33%	91.79%	Published prominently (with review)	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	7.7	176.03%	Published prominently	4 of 4 done	Published prominently (with review)	Includes all performance data
	91.43%	92.82%	Published prominently (with review)	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	7.7	164.05%	Published prominently	4 of 4 done	Published prominently (with review)	Includes all performance data

KPO4 Targets - Understand and respond to the customer experience

4.1 The overall satisfaction with the Building Standards service from the 2025/26 National Customer Survey conducted by the Building Standards Division was 7.6, down slightly from 7.7 last year. The department has now successfully achieved the national target of 7.5 for the last two years after many years of falling below the target. This is an excellent result and testimony to the work we have put in over not only last few years, but for the last decade to improve our customer satisfaction rating.

However, we recognise we cannot be satisfied with this result and must maintain the drive to continuously improve, with the key issues arising from our customer feedback still centred around the two main themes of communication and consistency. We will strive to improve both aspects in the coming year. Overall, customer satisfaction remains a priority for the department with focus sessions occurring every month to review all feedback received through the national customer survey. Any areas highlighted for improvement are acted upon to ensure old ways of working do not creep back in and the focus is always on new ideas to ensure sustained progress.

KPO5 Targets - Maintain financial governance

5.1		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
	Fee income:	£1,183,027	£1,470,366	£1,109,111	£1,200,557
	Staffing costs:	£772,970	£820,967	£696,415	£828,854
	Non staff costs:	£50,665	£33,322	£116,533	£94,249
	Other investment:	£34,554	£36,379	£36,415	£31,809
	Building standards verification fee income is to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).				
	The service continues to generate sufficient income overall, to cover staff costs plus 30%.				

KPO6 Targets - Commit to objectives outlined in the Building Standards Annual Report	
6.1	The Building Standards Annual Report is published prominently online with version control on the Council website.
6.2	The Building Standards Annual Report includes performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets.

Professional Expertise and Technical Processes

Protocols for dealing with work –

A fundamental full scale review of our procedures was undertaken in 2020. Since then, we continue to focus on this area to ensure ongoing improvement and to update our procedures accordingly. All staff briefing sessions and workshops are held to discuss and test the procedures to ensure that they are fully understood. We have a robust Quality Assurance Framework in place that includes a quarterly audit of procedures with full involvement from all members of the team. Results are evaluated by the management team who fully review, and any action points are implemented and feedback to staff.

We have a skills matrix that is used to ensure applications are allocated to staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to deal with them. In addition, a minimum of 5% of building warrants are checked to ensure consistency. A comprehensive peer review system is used for staff during development to enhance their skills and knowledge. This allows staff to be constantly challenged but with a robust checking process to ensure the department fulfils its duty as responsible verifier with staff not acting above or out with their competency.

Performance management systems –

At divisional level, Building Standards Senior Managers meet with colleagues across Sustainable Development to discuss a range of current issues, with performance management being a standing monthly agenda item. At service level, we have a dedicated Improvement Team that develops an ongoing programme of improvements, including details of the work and performance of the service. At team level, staff utilise the Enterprise workflow management system; this uses a traffic light system to prioritise workloads to ensure key performance outcomes are achieved. Weekly management team meetings have a structured agenda which always begins with a further review of service performance across the teams. Moreover, staff have the opportunity to participate in regular one to one sessions with their team manager so any performance issues can be discussed and addressed. Staff also take part in the Councils' Annual Performance Framework where individual discussions take place on "looking back" at performance in the last 12 months and "looking forward" for the next 12 months. The Enterprise Reporting Tool provides a clear view of workload allocation for every surveyor. It is flexible and allows reallocation of work during periods of staff absence.

Training and development/CPD –

The department recognises that staff are the number one factor to efficient and effective service delivery. Continuous staff development is always a priority for the service. On this basis, we seek to ensure all team members receive regular training on all aspects of the role, be it procedural or technical.

A key focus for the department is the current national roll out of the Professional Competency Framework (PCF). Staff have and will continue to be supported throughout the process and with guidance and training offered on the use of the skills builder system and creation of individual evidence portfolios. Further, the department has worked in collaboration with the Scottish Building Standards Hub and Learning Management System to assist us in this regard.

Formal training is provided internally to aid surveyors pursuing a professional membership (CABE/RICS/CIOB). A formal training partnership with the CIOB also provides surveyors a platform to pursue a professional membership to aid the individual and ensure the service has suitably qualified professionals.

A specific staff training forum is now embedded in the department, which has proven to be hugely successful. This was initiated to allow staff to have open and detailed discussions on what training they wish to receive and to give ownership by organising both internal and external training themselves. Membership is rotated yearly to give all staff the opportunity to be part of the forum. Bitesize seminars over lunchtimes have been extremely well received with an entire year of programme events in the calendar. The training forum is also responsible for organising the now annual staff away day where external speakers attend for a morning focused on technical aspects. Team building workshops organised for the afternoon sessions help to increase effective team working amongst colleagues and help build and develop good working relationships.

Generally speaking, the service aims to provide between 30-40 hours of training per year per member of staff. In addition to this, other centralised training is given which concentrates on health and safety requirements and changes to legislation. This helps to meet chartership professional training requirements. Moreover, staff are encouraged to attend meetings of LABSS to keep abreast of national issues affecting the Building Standards profession and to attend any national training sessions facilitated by LABSS or the SBSH.

Benchmarking –

We recognise the benefit of active participation in benchmarking and closer collaborative working. To this end we continue benchmarking with: -

- Southeast Scotland Consortium which comprises colleagues from Fife, Midlothian, East Lothian, West Lothian, Scottish Borders and ourselves. This is one of 7 consortia set up by LABSS. The consortia aims are: -
 - Developing best practice in the application of procedures.
 - Improving uniformity of interpretation and application of the technical standards.
 - Feeding into the work of the Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS).
- The Building Standards Division of the Scottish Government (BSD)
- The 32 Scottish Local Authorities through the work of Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS).
- The SOLACE group of authorities which share data to allow us to compare ourselves against a variety of similar authorities (with a mix of urban and large rural areas)

- The Scottish Building Standards Hub which supports transformation and improvement in building standards in Scotland.

Shared Services –

The department is actively engaging with industry through a procurement framework to secure structural engineering consultancy services. This is in the early stages of a trial with a private structural engineering firm as the department looks to increase its conversations with private industry. It is essential we continue to look at ways to augment our existing workforce with the expertise required to run an efficient service. However, this requires careful thought and planning to ensure that the cost of any external partners fit within a sustainable business model.

Likewise, the department is currently reviewing both its in-house and external expertise in aspects of fire engineering to ensure adequate and robust practices and procedures are in place. This includes looking at sharing fire engineering expertise with neighbouring authorities and linked departments within the council. We have also had productive discussions with the Scottish Building Standards Hub around these areas and have successfully used their Fire Engineering Hub services to obtain 3rd party checks on complex fire engineered solutions. Works will continue in these areas to develop this partnership working further.

Succession planning –

The age profile has changed significantly within the service over the last 5 years with a good range and mix of ages now present throughout the entire team and over the various roles contained within our structure. Although the department still has a number of junior staff, their experience and knowledge are ever increasing and setting us up for future seamless progression. In the last few years, we have successfully promoted over 10 members of staff throughout various progression roles using “home grown” talent. This industry leading approach sets us up well for future years but requires a constant mentoring program alongside a robust learning and development framework. This is extremely labour and time intensive, but the department will continue to invest its resources to this approach as the results speak for themselves.

The department has moved away from apprenticeships in recent years into a university graduate entry level which has proven to be both successful and highly desirable for prospective employees. This has allowed the training time to be cut significantly and allows a more instant payback in terms of staff production. However, the department continues its strong relationship with both Robert Gordon University and Heriot Watt University where current staff are studying at both universities to achieve a degree in a construction related subject. All staff currently studying, have a work placed mentor to help with their studies and regular meetings with their team managers to monitor academic progression and results.

National Participation –

The departments management team play an active and industry leading role in national issues across various workstreams. All members are active in LABSS with participation in both its executive and management structures. Further, for the last few years, one of the departments Team Managers has held the extremely prestigious position as chair of LABSS. This active participation allows the department to be at the forefront of national issues and help shape the future landscape of the industry.

Further to this, the management team also participate in various working groups and early adopters schemes in partnership with BSD, LABSS and the SBSH.

Quality Customer Experience

Customer communication strategies –

Ongoing reviews of the feedback from our National Customer Survey (NCS) are carried out and continue to reveal that one of the main issues is communication. The information highlights that the problem is not service wide and there are many examples of good communication and excellent customer service. Our ongoing strategy will:

- Focus and build on the examples of good communications and service provided by the majority of staff. Staff sharing their approach through workshops and setting out the aims and ambitions to improve the customer experience across the entire service.
- Use the immediate feedback from the NCS to identify problems and areas of improvement and react in a timelier manner.
- A customer newsletter continues to be issued on a quarterly basis to 1000s of our stakeholders.
- We will further investigate possible enhancements of our website and ensure up-to-date information is available both on our website and social media platforms.

The department achieved national recognition when it was selected as winners for the Customer Focus award at the LABSS AGM in May 2025. This award celebrates a service designed around customer needs and shows our commitment to providing an excellent customer service.

Although great work has been done on our communication strategy as shown by our recent survey scores and awards, it will continue to be an ongoing aspect of focus for the department as we understand the importance of clear and concise communication to our customers.

Customer Charter –

The Building Standards Customer Charter is reviewed annually in line with the updated performance framework. This document is published on the Council website and clearly sets out the level of service the Council will provide for the Building Standards service in Edinburgh.

Customer Engagement and feedback –

The service has fully embraced the NCS with the aim of obtaining timely and meaningful customer feedback from more customers. We actively promote this and achieve hundreds of completed surveys every year which gives a true reflection of performance and a wide and varied range of feedback. Complaints are monitored and lessons learned are used to make changes to the service. Refresher training is rolled out to staff annually on all aspects of complaints, councillor enquiries, FOI's etc. to ensure compliance and best practice is followed. The service also holds regular meetings with national housebuilders with our Operations Manager visiting various companies bi-annually to discuss industry wide topics, performance issues and how closer working practices and process can be developed. Further, the service continues to engage with industry partners such as Edinburgh University, Heriot Watt University and Napier University to create strong working relationships for the local area.

Customer Advice –

General advice is available through our general enquiry email service which staff cover on a rota basis. Customers are also directed to self-serve from the information on the Council

website where possible. Our phone service is available from 9am to 1pm every weekday for all general enquiries.

Accessibility of Service –

As a customer focussed service, we aim to make the service as accessible as possible which we do through the following methods: -

- The customer contact centre is operated by staff who are specifically trained to deal with general enquiries at first point of contact.
- We publicise on our website generic e-mail addresses for our three workstreams to which enquiries can be sent. These are monitored daily to ensure there are no delays in responding.
- Our recently refurbished customer HUB within headquarters at Waverley Court have allowed easier access for face-to-face meetings in our offices.
- We are prepared to meet locally with agents to discuss proposed warrants, although more and more 'discussions' now take place through virtual means to assist our customers where travel is an issue.

Pre-Application Service –

We actively encourage pre-application discussions for all applications with a construction cost of £250,000 or greater and other complex developments incorporating new or innovative design. This helps to pre-empt any major technical matters applicable to the proposals and to also agree critical procedural elements such as the staging of the warrant. We advise that this service can be undertaken at the designer's office, if attending our offices is inconvenient. Virtual meetings for pre-warrant discussions also take place on a regular non-formal basis for smaller development proposals.

Customer Agreements –

A customer agreement is offered for an application which falls within the service's Major Applications Team with a construction cost of £250,000 or greater. The customer is contacted as soon as reasonably practicable after an application has been received, to open dialogue around the design and programming of works, thus aiding the appropriate allocation of resources.

Customer Dissatisfaction (procedural or technical) –

The building regulations are supported by mandatory building standards which must be met and these are supported by guidance. On occasion there can be differences in opinions over a technical or procedural matter, or a perceived lack of consistency with another verifier. To address this, we will firstly try to resolve matters through sensible discussions or through the use of our in-house alternative means of compliance service where an applicant/agent can put their evidence to us which will be reviewed in-house and a decision given. If that does not lead to a satisfactory conclusion, we will escalate to Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) who have a dispute resolution service administered by the Scottish Building Standards Hub (SHBS) in place. This can involve the verifier escalating the enquiry to LABSS who then seek a national view before publishing their interpretation.

The Council has a robust complaints procedure for dealing with all forms of complaint and staff are regularly updated on the procedures and practices for dealing with these. Outstanding complaints are reviewed weekly at management meetings to ensure timescales and communication are in accordance with our customer charter.

Recognised External Customer Service Accreditations –

City of Edinburgh Council Building Standards department, in conjunction with the Planning Department, was UKAS accredited with ISO 9001:2015 until November of 2025. A cost benefit analysis was conducted which led to the conclusion that the accreditation was not offering best value for the wider department. The department will consistently review the benefits of an external customer service accreditation.

Operational and Financial Efficiency

Team Structures –

The Building Standards teams are based on a workstream structure and have been in place now for several years. The current structure offers various economies of scale and suits a workforce that has changed profile significantly over the last 5 years. It offers a great framework for its junior and less experienced members to learn and thrive. Over the last year especially, a key element implemented by the management team was a greater emphasis on cross team working via mentoring, joint inspections and shadowing opportunities. This has proved a great success with noticeable changes and improvements in junior staff as they learn from their more experienced colleagues.

Time Recording System –

The council operates a flexible working policy which is based on trust between managers and staff. Core times are not mandatory but to suit the needs of the service, as a customer facing department, the majority of staff work within a 9am to 5pm window. Staff are encouraged to record times to ensure that not only are they working sufficient hours, but equally, to ensure they do not work too many hours for their own wellbeing and work/life balance. Constant and open communication between managers and staff is required for this to be a successful system. Experienced staff also work from the main office at least one day a week with less experienced staff office based more frequently.

Financial Monitoring/Governance –

Monthly monitoring of fee income, warrant numbers and expenditure across all aspects is undertaken with verification costs and income reported on a quarterly basis to the BSD. We have monthly meetings with finance colleagues across the Planning & Building Standards service as well as quarterly meetings with the wider Place Directorate. These are supported with regular financial monitoring meetings with the Senior Accountants (allocated to BS) and the BS Operations Manager.

IT Systems –

We have continued to develop the use of Uniform Enterprise to help workflow throughout the service. The system is linked to the IDOX document management system, which in turn links into the Scottish Government eDevelopment Portal. This allows customers to lodge applications electronically and submit additional supporting documentation directly into their building warrant file. Previous migration of our data to the Cloud, hosted by Idox Solutions, has brought benefits in both performance and security.

Further, we have invested significant capital in recent times by upgrading all staff members with brand new surface pro computers which has brought about efficiency in speed of processing.

Digital Services –

A full range of digital services including online applications and website information is available. We are seeking to continually look at a channel shift and increase the levels of business conducted electronically. A planned investment in the appointment of a Senior ICT Officer, is planned who will be dedicated to aligning our improvement programme with

digital opportunities. This is an important step in terms of available resources and robustness for the service.

Finance Systems –

The Building Standards service adheres to the Council's financial policies and budgets whilst spending is kept under constant review. At a team level, all monies received in respect of building warrant fees are logged. This permits money received and budgets to be monitored by our finance colleagues.

Internal communication strategies –

The Council recognises the importance of having clear lines of communications to ensure staff are kept motivated and feel involved. There are regular corporate updates, including a blog from the Chief Executive. Our internal intranet (the ORB) provides excellent updates on all news, vacancies, wellbeing, and a full self-service system. The Building Standards service hold regular team briefs (usually monthly) and make a point to follow up any large scale training or team events with feedback surveys to ensure staff feel their opinions are valid and welcome. Each team has monthly in-person team meetings which are very interactive and encourage participation of staff across all levels. The management team meet twice a week with an action log completed and regularly reviewed.

Section 6. Service Improvement and Partnership Working

The department has achieved several years of sustained high performance however, we continuously look to improve our service and develop fresh, innovative ways of working. This includes looking at what currently works well and analysing how we can develop those aspects further. We are also looking at what we need to do better and identifying a strategic plan to implement the changes required. Furthermore, we thoroughly investigate all other avenues, including benchmarking against consortium partners and similar-sized authorities, speaking with industry to stay up to date with the latest best practice and liaising with the Scottish Government to ensure we are fully aware of future plans at a national level.

In the previous 12 months (Apr 25 / Mar 26) we did -

Number	Continuous Improvement Action	Status
1	Regular meetings held throughout the year via 1 to 1 in person meetings, team meetings and drop-in sessions to help assess the Stress levels/Wellbeing of staff. Annual wellbeing survey carried out, results and responses analysed by management team and feedback sessions to staff.	Complete
2	Embedded the use of Shifts within MS Teams as a means of checking in/out for lone workers on site.	Complete
3	Staff trained on all updated procedures and legislation. Staff Training Forum fully embedded and regular lunchtime seminars held.	Complete
4	Management team to obtain a formal management qualification via planned course through SBSH.	Ongoing
5	A running programme of quarterly Quality Audits has been undertaken with all staff members included. Outcomes of the audits are fed back to the Management Team and appropriate improvement actions implemented.	Complete
6	Sustained high performance. Stats were just below 95% of warrants being issued first reports within 20 day target but department was above 90% of warrants being granted within 10 days of receiving satisfactory info.	Ongoing
7	Rationalise all drop down menus and letters within Uniform.	Complete
8	Reviewed procedure for Scottish Fire & Rescue Service consultation alongside national best practice guide via the SBSH.	Complete
9	All BS Reports now created via Uniform query requests. Associated procedure and staff training implemented and review completed to confirm efficiencies savings as intended.	Complete
10	Undertook a programme of face-to-face engagement with all major housebuilders and local architects' networks.	Complete

In the next 12 months (Apr 26 / Mar 27) we will aim to -

Number	Continuous Improvement Action	Timescale
1	Aim to maintain high performance and sustained high performance with 95% of warrants being issued first reports within 20 day target and 90% of warrants being granted within 10 days of receiving satisfactory info.	Ongoing
2	Continually review and update the website content to help improve the customer journey.	Ongoing
3	Continue programme of face-to-face engagement with all major housebuilders and local architects' networks. Further, continue with quarterly newsletters to 1000s of customers.	Ongoing
4	Continue LABSS engagement with members of the management team active participants on the management and executive committee including the position of Chair.	Ongoing
5	Review current Procedures around Enforcement of Works without Warrant, Occupation without Completion, Dangerous and Defective Buildings.	Mar 27
6	All staff to be re-trained on reasonable inquiry measures, remote virtual inspections and CCNP actions.	Mar 27
7	New Procedures required for processing Structural Engineers information. New Enterprise tasks linked to the above to be created.	Dec 26
8	Implementation of data analytics tool such as Power BI or IDOX insights.	Dec 26
9	Full review of existing model of operation to ensure it is efficient and effective. Ongoing review will take place during to ensure the model is not only affordable but flexible and offers a collaborative approach with key internal services and wider Council pressures.	Dec 26
10	Continue staff program of wellbeing resources and managerial support	Ongoing

Partnership working

Building Standards does not and cannot operate effectively and efficiently by working in isolation. The following are examples of how partnership working has and will drive collaboration and improved service delivery. Over the last 12 months and for the next 12 months, we will work with the following partners:

<i>Within the Council</i>	
Planning Services	Working collaboratively to encourage development within the city.
Legal Services	Consult and discuss matters of legislative interpretation with our solicitors and progress applications. Consultation on enforcement matters.
Licensing	Consultee for applications in relation to The Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005
Housing Services	Work with colleagues to ensure the delivery of the Council's commitment to social housing.
Economic Development /Inclusive Growth	Collaborative working on building warrants that have significant impact for inward investment, ensuring early engagement & efficient progression through the process.
<i>Outwith the Council</i>	
Southeast Scotland Consortium (comprising colleagues from Fife, Midlothian, East Lothian, West Lothian, Scottish Borders)	Identifying best practice; improving consistency in the application and interpretation of technical standards.
LABSS	Participate in consultations and attend meetings.
Scottish Fire and Rescue Service	Consultation as and when required on buildings warrants, dangerous buildings and other specified applications.
Scottish Government	Participation in strategy forums, working groups, benchmarking and sharing of best practice.
NHS Lothian	Regular discussions and updates took place during the Covid-19 Pandemic. More recently, discussions ongoing around streamlining new warrant applications.
Building Standards Division	Work with the Scottish Government's Building Standards Division, to meet the fundamental overarching principles of driving forward the future of building standards throughout Scotland.
Scottish Building Standards Hub	Working collaboratively with the SBSH to drive consistency.
Engagement with external stakeholder organisations and groups	Regular engagement with key stakeholders which includes various national house builders, Edinburgh Chartered Architect Network, Edinburgh University etc.

Section 7. Building Standards – Additional Data

In 2025/26, Building Standards performance was as follows:

Building warrants and amendments to building warrant	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4297 building warrant and associated applications received including amendment to warrants.
Completion certificates	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4917 completion certificates submitted.• 6449 decisions made.
Certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1151 certificates of design submitted.• 111 certificates of construction submitted.
Energy Performance Certificates (EPCs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1838 copy certificates received (domestic).• 26 copy certificates received (non-domestic).
Statements of Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1576 copy certificates received (domestic).• 8 copy certificates received (non-domestic).
Enforcement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 Notices served under sections 25 to 30.• 0 Cases referred to procurator fiscal.• 0 Cases where LA has undertaken work.

Section 8. Building Standards – Customer Charter

Purpose of the Building Standards Customer Charter:

The Building Standards Customer Charter provides information about the standards of service that all verifiers should meet. This gives customers the reassurance that a consistent, high-quality service will be delivered no matter which verifier provides the service.

It is divided into two parts: 1) National Charter; and 2) Local Charter.

PART 1: National

Charter Our Aims:

To grant building warrants and accept completion certificates:

- To secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in and about buildings and others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings
- Furthering the conservation of fuel and power
- Furthering the achievement of sustainable development.

Our vision/values:

To provide a professional and informative service to all our customers.

Our Commitments:

Nationally all verifiers will:

1. Seek to minimise the time it takes for customers to obtain a building warrant or amendment to a building warrant.
2. Ensure continuous improvement around the robustness of verification assessments to ensure compliance.
3. Meet and seek to exceed customer expectations and actively promote the National Customer Survey.
4. Proactively engage with customer groups, through focus groups, newsletters, guidance on services etc.
5. Act on feedback received from customers (including from the National Customer Satisfaction Survey) to improve services and the customer experience.
6. Provide information on local formal complaints procedures, the LABSS Dispute Resolution Process, and the BSD Customer Performance Reporting Service, and refer customers as appropriate.

7. Provide accurate financial data that is evidence-based.
8. Engage and participate in partnership working at local and national level to identify and embed service improvements at a national level.
9. Work collaboratively with the Scottish Building Standards Hub.
10. Adhere to our Building Standards Annual Report outlining our objectives and performance targets
11. Fully adhere to the commitments outlined in this Charter (including information on customer dissatisfaction in relation to building warrant processing timescales, processes and technical interpretation).
12. Use a consistent format for continuous improvement plans.

Our targets:

KPO1 Targets	
1.1	95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
1.2	90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
KPO3 Measures	
3.1	Workforce: Supply v demand levels (%)
3.2	Overall Performance: KPO Targets met (%)
KPO4 Targets	
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.
KPO5 Targets	
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).
5.2	Building standards verification fee income invested into verification services (%)
KPO6 Targets	
6.1	Building Standards Annual Report published prominently online with version control (reviewed at least annually).
6.2	Building Standards Annual Report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026)

Information:

National information on [the performance framework for verifiers](#) can be found at the Scottish Government website.

PART 2: Local

Introduction

The purpose of the Building Standards system is to protect the public interest. The system sets out the essential standards that are required to be met when building work or conversion of a building takes place in order to meet building regulations. The Building Standards system checks that proposed building work or conversion of a building meets standards; inspections are limited to a minimal necessary to ensure compliance with legislation. The control of work on site is not down to the system but is a matter for contracts and arrangements in place between a builder and client. Verifiers, appointed by Scottish Ministers are responsible for the independent checking of applications for building warrants to construct or demolish buildings, to provide services, fittings, or equipment in buildings, or for conversions. Building Standards is the service within the City of Edinburgh Council which carries out the verification function.

What this charter does

This charter explains what the Council's Building Standards service does and what its customers can expect from us:

We will consider and make decisions on building warrant applications, completion certificates and property inspections to secure the health, safety, welfare, and convenience of users and achieve sustainable development.

Customer communication and engagement

We recognise the importance of effective communication with customers and engage with them in several ways including:

- issuing a quarterly newsletter
- regular engagement with stakeholders
- facilitating technical and procedural meetings via pre-warrant discussions for large/complex buildings
- provision of an updated and informative website
- publication of Building Standards Customer Charter online
- publication of Building Standards Annual Report online
- regular review of correspondence issued by the service to ensure an accurate and effective customer engagement.

Customer Satisfaction

Your views on our service delivery mean a lot to us to help shape areas of improvement. In the last year we have listened to feedback from our customers through a series of outbound calls, focus groups and via the National Customer Satisfaction Survey. We strive each year to improve our scoring on the National Survey and will continually engage with our customers to listen and improve service delivery.

Getting in touch

If you contact us by telephone:

- We will help you with your query on the spot if we can
- We will aim to respond within one working day if you leave a message
- We will direct you to further information online

If you email or write to us:

- We will respond to you within ten working days or tell you if we need longer
- We will ensure our response is free from jargon and easy to understand
- We will direct you to further information online
- We will translate information into large print, other languages or Braille if needed.

If you visit us:

- We now operate a hybrid working model, with staff members working from home on certain days of the week. You can still meet with a member of our staff by booking an appointment directly with them. In most instances we would try to carry this out via a video call but face to face meetings can be arranged if required.
- One of our staff will give you information that meets your needs or direct you to where you can find it online, including online forms
- We will have accessible public offices

What you need to know

What the Building Standards System does is set out by the Scottish Government in legislation, guidance, and advice. Further information is available on Scottish Government's [Building Standards webpages](#).

Building warrants

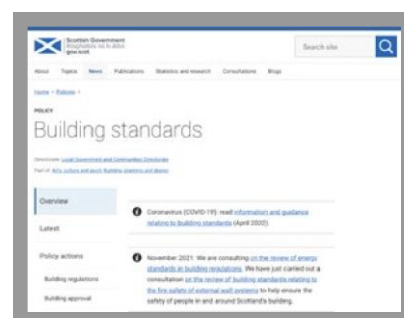
You should be aware that to carry out work which requires a Building Warrant, without first having obtained this type of approval, is an offence in terms of Section 8(2) of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003. Additionally, it can lead to legal complications if you want to sell your property.

Making a building warrant application

Before you carry out any work to your building, you should check our [Frequently Asked Questions](#) to see if you need a building warrant. Most works need a building warrant which you must obtain before starting the work.

You should apply for a building warrant on the [eBuilding Standards website](#). You can also download a paper version of the form from the website.

You can find further guidance on how to apply for a Building Warrant, along with our Building Warrant fees list showing how much your application will cost on our [website](#).



Building warrant applications - what you can expect from us

Within four working days, we will carry out an administrative check on your application and advise you of any problems after this check. Alternatively, we will let you know your application is valid and is being progressed.

Building Standards performance targets

- **95%** of first reports on building warrant applications, telling you if you need to make changes to your proposals to comply with current building regulations to be issued within 20 working days.
- **90%** of building warrants, if the final revised drawings are altered to the Council's satisfaction, to be issued within 10 working days.
- **90%** of requests for a site inspection in relation to a completion certificate to be responded to within ten working days.

Making a decision on a building warrant application

We will grant a building warrant if we are satisfied that the building will be constructed, converted or demolished in accordance with the appropriate regulations.

What you can expect from us

We will seek to minimise the overall average time taken to grant a building warrant measured from the date of a valid application to the date of granting the warrant.

Works where there is no record of permission

We understand that sometimes work is carried out and there is no record of permission. This is called retrospective works. This can be particularly frustrating when you are trying to sell your house.

If you do not have a building warrant or a certificate of completion, there are various ways you can get this sorted.

Retrospective works – what you can expect from us

We will direct you to our online [Building Standards Register](#) if you want to check whether work has permission.

We will ask you to submit a [Completion Certificate where no Building Warrant obtained](#) if the work was carried out and completed on or after 1 May 2005, together with plans and the relevant fee. Our target response time is twenty working days.

We will ask you to apply for a [Property Inspection](#) together with the relevant fee, if the work is of a minor non-structural nature and was carried out and completed before 1 May 2005 and you do not have a building warrant for the works.

We will ask you to apply for a [Confirmation of Completion](#) together with the relevant fee, if you have a Building Warrant but do not have a Completion Certificate and the works were carried out before 1 May 2005.

Our target response time for both services is ten working days.

Information Requests

The Building Standards service holds a great deal of information. Some must be kept in perpetuity, but other information is only kept in accordance with a records retention schedule. Under the Public Records (Scotland) Act 2011 the Council is obliged to keep schedules of what records we keep and for how long we keep them. You can find further information on our [Records Management webpage](#).

Anyone has a right to request information from a public authority. Data relating to building warrants is available online on our [Public Access](#) system and you may find the information you want there. Paper records are also available to view and copy.

Information requests – what you can expect from us

We will hold information in accordance with our records retention schedule. We will make information available online in accordance with the Council's publication scheme.

The [Building Standards Plan Store](#) can be contacted to view and copy records when authorised to do so.

Complaints

We will consider all complaints made to us about service delivery. However, disagreement with a decision of the Council will not, in itself, be a ground for complaint and in many situations, there is a separate procedure for an applicant to appeal against such decisions. The quickest way to sort things out is to talk to the officer concerned. However, if this does not work our formal complaints procedure has two stages:

1. Frontline Resolution
2. Investigation

Frontline Resolution -

We will respond to your complaint within five working days. We aim to resolve your concerns within this timescale. If we need more time, we'll let you know. If you are not satisfied with our response, you can ask us to review your complaint.

Investigation -

We will appoint a senior Council officer to review your complaint. We will tell you who the Council officer is and respond within 20 working days. If your complaint is complex, we may be unable to resolve your concerns within this timescale. Instead, we'll contact you to agree a different date.

If you are still not satisfied, you can then contact the [Scottish Public Services Ombudsman \(SPSO\)](#).

If you wish to contact the Building Standards Service in relation to a complaint, compliment, or comment, please [email Building Standards VIP](#).

Complaints – what you can expect from us If you make a complaint:

- We will aim to resolve it on the spot
- We will respond to you within five working days if we can't resolve it straight away
- We will investigate your complaint if you are still not satisfied and give you a final response within 20 working days unless we need longer.

Data Protection

When handling personal data, the Council must do so fairly and lawfully in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations.

Data Protection – what you can expect from us

We will comply with the Data Protection Act when we publish information.

We will redact any personal email addresses, phone numbers, signatures, and other personal information from our online records.

We will consider whether we can remove information from our website if you are not happy about its publication.

Seeking advice

The Council is committed to giving advice on a range of building warrant proposals. If you are unable to go online to seek advice, you can call us daily between 9am and 1pm on 0131 529 3550 or [email General Enquiries](#) with your question.

Seeking advice – what you can expect from us

If you have a general enquiry about a building warrant matter, we will aim to respond within ten working days. As part of this process, we will advise you where you can find the information online.

Pre-warrant discussions will normally be restricted to larger high value projects or to more complex lower value projects. Requests for meetings will be handled by team managers and these will be decided based on the complexity and/or size of the proposals.

Contact Us

Please note that we now operate a hybrid working model, with staff members working from home on certain days of the week. However, you can still contact us in the following ways -

General Enquiries

If you have a general enquiry not relating to a current Building Warrant, please [email General Enquiries](#) with your question and we will aim to respond within 10 working days.

If you have an enquiry about a current Building Warrant, please email the relevant technical team and we will aim to respond within 10 working days.

Major Applications team

We process applications for plan assessment and site inspection where the estimated value of works exceeds £250,000 for large or complex construction projects. The team also process all applications in relation to new build housing sites. [Email Building Standards major applications](#) with any queries.

Plan Reporting team

We carry out the assessment of Building Warrant applications with an estimated value of works up to £250,000. [Email Building Standards plan reporting](#) with any queries.

Site Inspections team

We deal with inspections at the interim or completion stage for all projects with an estimated value of works up to £250,000. [Email Building Standards site inspections](#) with any queries.

Phone

The Building Standards service can be contacted daily between 9am and 1pm on 0131 529 3550.

See [our website](#) for more information