



Interactive house: find out if you need planning permission for your building project

This guide gives you information on planning permission and building regulations. Links will take you to further information on the Planning Portal.

Adverts and signs

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for a small sign, eg with your house name or number on it.

You may need to apply for advertisement consent to display an advert bigger than 0.3 square metres.

Adverts and signs: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/advertssigns/>

Building regulations

For household adverts and signs you don't normally need building regulations approval, unless they are electrical signs.

You have to keep your signs and adverts 'in a safe condition'.

Air source heat pumps

Planning permission

From 1 December 2011 the installation of an air source heat pump on domestic premises is considered to be permitted development, not needing an application for planning permission, provided specified limits and conditions are met.

If you live in a listed building or a conservation area, you should also contact your council to check on local policy.

Air source heat pumps: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/heatpumps/>

Building regulations

You normally need building regulations approval for installing an air source heat pump. Talk to a professional engineer for advice before starting work.

Greener homes

Air source heat pumps remove heat stored in the air and send it into your central heating system and hot water tank.

Heat pumps: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/greenerhomes/generation/heatpumps>

Bathrooms

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for maintenance or replacement of bathrooms. If you live in a listed building, you should check with your local planning authority.

Bathrooms: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/kitchensbathrooms>

Building regulations

If you want to replace fittings such as a bath, toilet, shower or sink, in an existing bathroom you do not need to get building regulations approval. Drainage or electrical works that form part of the refit may require building regulations approval.

If you want to install or replace your bath with a whirlpool or spa bath, you might need approval.

If you are creating a new bathroom – in a new extension, for instance – you will need to get building regulations approval

Bathrooms: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/kitchensbathrooms>

Greener homes

If you are renovating a bathroom, think about what you can do to save water.

Greener homes: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/kitchensbathrooms>

Barbecues

Planning permission

You can build many types of buildings and structures in your garden or on the land around your house as 'permitted development'. This means they don't need planning permission.

Make sure you follow the conditions for permitted developments.

Barbecues: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/outbuildings/>

Building regulations

If your project includes electrical or gas works, you need to comply with building regulations. You should take care that the installation is safe.

You may want to use an installer who is registered with a competent person scheme. Contact the building control department at your local council if you are unsure about building regulations for your project.

Micro combined heat and power/biomass

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for installing a micro-CHP or biomass system in a house if the work is all internal.

If the installation needs a flue outside, you have to make sure you follow the conditions for permitted development.

Micro-CHP: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/microchp/>

Biomass: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/biomass/>

Building regulations

You need to comply with building regulations. The installation should be carried out by a qualified installer in line with the standards set out in the 'Low or Zero Carbon Energy Sources: Strategic Guide'

Building regulations also apply to the electrical installation and plumbing work.

Micro-CHP: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/microchp/>

Biomass: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/biomass/>

CCTV

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for installing a CCTV camera. If you live in a listed building or conservation area, you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

You generally don't need building regulations approval for a CCTV camera. You should take care that the installation is safe and stable.

If your installation includes electrical work in your home or garden, you will have to follow building regulations.

You may want to use an installer registered with a competent person scheme. If you do the work yourself, you should get approval from a building control body. In any case you should contact an installer for advice.

Ceilings

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for maintenance of ceilings. If you live in a listed building, you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

If you replace over 25 per cent of a ceiling below an unheated loft or a flat roof, you have to comply with building regulations. Usually you'll also have to improve the ceiling's insulation.

Ceilings: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/ceilingsfloors/>

Circuits and electrics

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for maintenance or installation of electrics. If you live in a listed building, you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

If you are carrying out electrical work in your home or garden, you will have to comply with building regulations.

For some electrical work you should use an installer who is registered with a competent person scheme or get approval from a building control body.

You don't need approval for:

- repairs
- replacements
- maintenance work
- extra power points
- extra lighting points
- other alterations to existing circuits (except in a kitchen or bathroom, or outdoors)

Circuits and electrics: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/electrics/>

Conservatories

Planning permission

The same planning regulations apply to a conservatory as to any other extension, regardless of the materials you are using.

It's possible that in some cases your conservatory won't need planning permission. This depends on its size, position on the house and distance to the boundaries of your property.

Conservatories: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/conservatories/>

Building regulations

Conservatories are normally exempt from building regulations when:

- they are built at ground level and are less than 30 square metres in floor area
- the conservatory is separated from the house by external quality walls, doors or windows.
- there should be an independent heating system with separate temperature and on/off controls

- glazing and any fixed electrical installations comply with the applicable building regulations requirements

If you want to create a new structural opening (for example a door) or increase the distance between the conservatory and the house, you need approval.

Conservatories: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/conservatories/>

Greener homes

A badly designed conservatory can be a huge energy drain for the house as a whole.

Conservatories: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/conservatories/>

Decking

Planning permission

England: You don't need planning permission for putting up decking, or other raised platforms, in your garden, providing:

- they are no more than 30 cm above the ground
- together with other extensions, outbuildings etc, they cover no more than 50 per cent of the garden area

If these conditions are not met you will need to apply for planning permission.

Decking: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/decking/>

Building regulations

You normally have to comply with building regulations if your decking needs planning permission.

If you're unsure about whether you need planning permission, contact your the building control department at your local council.

Decking: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/decking/>

Decoration

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for internal decorations. If you live in a listed building you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

Any internal decorating such as wallpapering, new skirting boards or painting doesn't need building regulations approval.

Dormer windows and roof extensions

Planning permission

You can find advice on planning permission for dormer windows and roof extensions in the information for loft conversions.

Dormer windows: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/loftconversion/>

Building regulations

You need building regulations approval to convert a loft or attic into a living space.

Dormer windows: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/loftconversion/#NewDormer>

Loft conversions: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/loftconversion/>

Dropped kerb

Planning Permission

A dropped kerb, crossover or vehicle crossing must be built to specific standards and approved by your council. In some cases you also need planning permission.

They can be:

- a public footpath crossing
- a verge for your vehicle to your property from the highway

Building regulations

Building regulations do not normally apply to dropped kerbs. Work is usually carried out by the local authority. You need to make sure that any changes don't make access to the property more difficult.

Extensions and additions

Planning permission

You can extend or add to your house without applying for planning permission as long as you meet the limits and conditions.

What is allowed without planning permission depends largely on:

- the size of the addition
- where it is on the house
- how far it is from the boundaries of your property

Extensions and additions: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/extensions/>

Building regulations

You normally have to comply with building regulations if you want to build an extension to your home.

A porch or conservatory at ground level and smaller than 30 square metres is normally exempt but any glazing and fixed electrical installation have to be in line with building regulations.

Extensions and additions: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/extensions/>

Greener homes

Using energy efficient glazing is a way of making an extension greener.

Extensions and additions: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/extensions/>

External walls

Planning permission

You don't need to apply for planning permission for repairs, maintenance or minor improvements, such as painting your house.

If you live in a listed building, you will need listed building consent for any major inside or outside works.

If you live in a conservation area, national park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Broads, you need planning permission before cladding your house with:

- stone
- artificial stone
- tiles
- plastic
- timber

Outside walls: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/externalwalls/>

Insulation: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/insulation/>

Building regulations

If you want to re-render or replace timber cladding to external walls, you might have to apply for building regulations approval and improve insulation where:

- 25 per cent or more of an external wall is re-rendered, re-clad, re-plastered or re-lined inside
- 25 per cent or more of the outside leaf of a wall is rebuilt

If you want to insert insulation into a cavity wall, you have to comply with building regulations.

Building regulations make sure that the insulation material is suitable, and that there is no risk of formaldehyde gas emission.

External walls: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/externalwalls/>

Insulation: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/insulation/>

Greener homes

If you have cavity walls, it's usually worth looking into getting insulation installed within the cavity.

Cavity walls: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/insulation/#CavityWall>

Fascia

Planning permission

Replacing, painting and other repairs to the fascia don't need planning permission.

If you live in a listed building or designated area (conservation area, national park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty etc), you should check with your local planning authority before you start work.

Building regulations

To replace any fascia board or soffit you don't normally need building regulations approval.

You have to make sure you keep all existing vents because they provide ventilation to the roof.

Fascia: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/fascias/>

Fences, walls and gates

Planning permission

You need to apply for planning permission if you want to put up or add to a fence, wall or gate and:

- it's over two metres high
- it's next to a highway (or a highway footpath) and over one metre high
- your permitted development rights to put up or alter fences, walls and gates have been removed by your local planning authority
- your house is a listed building or in the curtilage of a listed building
- the fence, wall or gate borders on to a listed building or its curtilage

Fences, walls and gates: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/fenceswallsgates/>

Building regulations

You don't need building regulations approval for fences, walls and gates but they need to be structurally sound and maintained.

If the garden wall is classed as a 'party fence wall', you may have to notify the next door owner.

Fences, walls and gates: find out more on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/fenceswallsgates/>

Floors

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for maintenance of floors. If you live in a listed building, you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

If you are replacing or fitting a new floor, you will normally need building regulations approval. You should consider the weight the new floor will have to take, sound insulation and fire safety.

Floors: find out more on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/insulation/#FloorInsulation>

Greener homes

If you have a suspended timber ground floor, you can make large energy savings by sealing any gaps to stop draughts.

Floor insulation: find out more on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/greenerhomes/energysaving/floorinsulation>

Flue, chimney and vent pipes

Planning permission

Fitting, altering or replacing a flue, chimney or soil and vent pipe doesn't normally need planning permission as long as you follow certain rules and conditions.

Flues, chimneys & pipes: find out more on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/flueschimneys/>

Building regulations

As part of the building regulations you have to make sure that:

- the flue, chimney or pipe is big enough for the installation
- flues create enough draught
- flues can take the expected temperatures
- flues are gas tight
- flues let out discharge (eg smoke) away from openings in the building

Flues and chimneys should be fixed in appropriate places.

Ventilation pipes within three metres of any opening into the building, such as a window, must finish at least 900mm higher than the opening.

Flues, chimneys & pipes: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/flueschimneys/>

Fuel tanks

Planning permission

Small domestic fuel tanks can normally be installed without planning permission, but there are some limits and conditions that you have to consider.

The same permitted development rights apply to oil storage and liquid petroleum gas tanks.

Any container within the curtilage of a listed building will need planning permission.

Fuel tanks: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/fueltanks/>

Building regulations

When you install a fuel tank you have to comply with building regulations. If the tank is above ground, you have to make sure that it's protected from fire and leakage.

Fuel tanks: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/fueltanks/>

Garages

Planning permission

You can build garages in your garden or on the land around your house without planning permission, but you have to follow some limits and conditions.

Any outbuilding within the curtilage of a listed building needs planning permission.

Building a garage: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/outbuildings/>

Garage conversion: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/garageconversion/>

Building regulations

If you want to build a garage that is attached to your home, you will normally need to apply for building regulation approval.

The construction of an attached carport (open on at least two sides) doesn't normally need approval if the floor area is smaller than 30 square metres. Any electrical installations have to follow building regulations.

The construction of a detached garage doesn't normally need approval if:

- it's smaller than 15 square metres
- it's between 15 and 30 square metres and at least one metre from any boundary
- it's between 15 and 30 square metres and constructed from substantially non-combustible materials

All electrical installations have to follow building regulations.

If you want to convert your garage into a living space, building regulations normally apply.

Building a garage: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/outbuildings/>

Garage conversion: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/garageconversion/>

Ground source heat pumps

Planning permission

Installing a ground source heat pump system doesn't usually need planning permission. If you live in a listed building or a conservation area, you should contact your council to check on local policy.

Ground source heat pumps: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/heatpumps/>

Building regulations

Building regulation apply to ground source heat pumps. This includes all electrical and plumbing work. Installation should be carried out by a qualified installer.

The equipment, installation and testing of the pump must follow standards detailed in the 'Low or Zero Carbon Energy Sources: Strategic Guide (LZC)' and 'Domestic Heating Compliance Guide'.

Ground source heat pumps: find out more on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/heatpumps/>

Greener homes

Ground source heat pumps transfer the heat from the ground to your central heating and hot water tank.

Ground source heat pumps: find out more on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/greenerhomes/generation/heatpumps>

Heat pump distributor (internal) Ground source heat pumps (internal unit)

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission when installing a heat pump in a house if the work is all inside. If the building is listed, you should check with your local planning authority.

Internal heat pumps: find out more on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/heatpumps/>

Building regulations

If the installation is part of a new or replacement heating and hot water system you have to follow the rules for energy efficiency in the building regulations. You should get advice from a professional before starting work. Any electrical or drainage work must comply with building regulations.

Greener homes

Ground source heat pumps transfer the heat from the ground to your central heating and hot water tank.

Heat pumps: find out more on the Planning Portal
<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/greenerhomes/generation/heatpumps>

Insulation

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for installing insulation as long as the outside of your house isn't changed.

If the building is listed or is in a conservation area, you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

Insulation has to follow building regulations whether it's installed during the construction of a house or fitted afterwards.

Insulation: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/insulation/>

Greener homes

Without loft insulation you could be losing as much as a quarter of your heating costs through your roof.

Insulation: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/greenerhomes/energysaving/>

Internal walls

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for maintaining your inside walls or building new ones. If you live in a listed building you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

If you want to remove an internal wall, or form an opening in an internal wall, you will normally have to comply with building regulations.

Before knocking down a wall you should make sure it's not a supporting wall.

Internal walls: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/internalwalls/>

Kitchens

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for maintenance or replacement of a kitchen. If you live in a listed building you should check with your local planning authority.

Kitchens: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/kitchensbathrooms>

Building regulations

If you want to replace fittings in an existing kitchen, you do not need to get building regulations approval. Drainage or electrical works that form part of the refit may require building regulations approval.

If you are creating a new kitchen, for example in a new extension, you will need to get building regulations approval.

Kitchens: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/kitchensbathrooms>

Greener homes

Check energy usage ratings and features of appliances such as water consumption.

Kitchens: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/kitchensbathrooms>

Lighting (outside)

Planning permission

You don't need planning permission to install outside lights or light fittings.

When installing outside lights you should make sure that they are not too bright to disturb others or point towards nearby houses.

If you live in a listed building, you will need listed building consent for any major inside or outside works.

Lighting: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/lighting/>

Building regulations

For electrical work and lights on the outside of your house, you have to comply with building regulations.

You should use an installer who is registered with the competent person scheme. Alternatively you can apply to your local authority's building control department or an approved inspector for approval.

Lighting: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/lighting/>

Greener homes

Energy efficient light bulbs can reduce your carbon footprint and save you money on your energy bills.

Lighting (indoor)

Planning permission

You don't need planning permission to install lights or minor light fittings.

When installing outside lights you should make sure that they are not too bright to disturb others or point towards nearby houses.

If you live in a listed building, you need listed building consent for any major inside or outside works.

Lighting: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/lighting/>

Building regulations

For electrical work and lights inside your house, building regulations apply.

Building regulations don't apply to: repairs, replacements and maintenance work, extra lighting points, and other changes to existing circuits (except in a kitchen or bathroom, or outdoors).

Lighting: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/lighting/>

Electrics: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/electrics/>

Greener homes

Energy efficient light bulbs can reduce your carbon footprint and save you money on your energy bills.

Find out more about energy saving light bulbs

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Energyandwatersaving/Energyandwaterefficiencyinyourhome/DG_179919

Loft conversion

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for a loft conversion unless you extend the roof space beyond the limits and conditions allowed by permitted development rights.

Loft conversions: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/loftconversion/>

Building regulations

You have to comply with building regulations if you want to convert the loft in your home.

Building regulations make sure, for example, that:

- new floors are strong enough
- the supporting structure of the house is not endangered (including the roof)
- there is a safe fire escape
- stairs to the new floor are designed safely
- there is enough sound insulation between the conversion and the rooms below

You also need to check the Party Wall etc Act 1996 under which you must give adjoining owners notice.

Loft conversions: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/loftconversion/>

Protected species

Work on a loft or a roof may affect protected species like bats. You need to consider this when planning the work, and you might need a survey. If bats are using the building, you might need a wildlife licence.

Protected species: contact Natural England

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/default.aspx>

Maintaining drainpipes

Planning permission

You don't normally need to apply for planning permission for repairs or maintenance on drainpipes. These are considered permitted development.

Sometimes you may need to apply for planning permission for some of these works because your council has withdrawn the permitted development rights.

Soil and vent pipes will also normally be permitted development as long as you follow certain rules and conditions.

If you live in a listed building, you will need listed building consent for any major inside or outside works.

Drainpipes: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/drainssewers/>

Soil and vent pipes: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/flueschimneys/>

Building regulations

If you want to repair or replace an existing drainpipe, manhole or associated fitting with the same part, you don't need building regulations approval.

If you fit a new drainpipe, manhole, or fittings attached to these, you normally need building regulations approval.

You need approval for new rainwater or foul drains inside and outside the building. Building regulations also apply to all non-mains foul sewerage arrangements (i.e. those using septic tanks), including their outlets and drainage fields.

Ventilation pipes within three metres of any opening into the building, such as a window, must finish at least 900mm higher than the opening.

Drainpipes: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/drainssewers/>

Manholes and drains

Planning permission

Although the work itself may not need planning permission, you should make clear who has ownership and responsibility before making any changes or carrying out maintenance.

Drains, sewers and manholes may be shared with neighbours or owned by the relevant water authority.

If you don't confirm these details before starting work or ignore the relevant standards and laws, this could lead to legal action against you at your own cost.

Manholes and drains: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/drainssewers/>

Building regulations

If you want to repair or replace an existing drainpipe, manhole or associated fitting with the same part, you don't need building regulations approval.

If you fit a new drainpipe, manhole, or fittings attached to these, you will normally need approval.

This also applies to new rainwater or foul drains inside as well as outside the building.

You also have to follow building regulations for all work on non-mains foul sewerage arrangements (i.e. those using septic tanks), including their outlets and drainage fields.

Drainpipes: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/drainssewers/>

Micro-combined heat and power

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for installing a micro-CHP system in a house if the work is all inside.

If the installation needs a flue outside, it will normally be permitted development as long as you follow the relevant conditions.

Micro-CHP systems: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/microchp/>

Building regulations

You have to follow building regulations for micro-CHP systems. You should think about factors such as ventilation, noise and general safety. Installation should be carried out by a qualified installer.

The equipment, installation and testing of a micro-CHP system must all follow the relevant standards set out in full in the 'Low or Zero Carbon Energy Sources: Strategic Guide (LZC)'.

You also have to follow building regulations for any electrical installations and plumbing work.

Micro-CHP systems: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/microchp/>

Greener homes

Micro-CHP systems for individual homes are fairly new. They produce heat, warm water and electricity.

Producing energy from biomass is a carbon neutral process and can save costs on your heating and electricity bills.

Micro-CHP systems: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/greenerhomes/generation/microchp>

Party wall

Building regulations

Some building work doesn't come under building regulations but is included in the Party Wall etc Act 1996. This covers work that could affect the neighbouring property, including:

- work on shared walls or structures
- building a new wall that affects the boundaries of the next door property
- digging near the neighbouring property
- In some cases both the Party Wall Act and building regulations apply

Before you start work you should find out if it falls within the Party Wall Act.

Party walls: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/buildingregulations/buildingpolicyandlegislation/currentlegislation/partywallact>

Patios, driveways and hardstanding

Planning permission

England: You can pave over your front garden without the need for planning permission if you follow rules aimed at reducing rainwater run-off.

Paving front gardens: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/pavingfrontgarden/>

Elsewhere around your house there are no restrictions on the area of land which you can cover with hard surfaces at, or near, ground level.

For bigger embanking or terracing projects you might need planning permission. If you live in a listed building, you will need listed building consent for any major inside or outside works.

Patios: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/patiosdriveways/>

Building regulations

Generally, a new driveway or patio area doesn't need building regulations approval.

You need to make sure that any changes don't make access to the property more difficult.

Paving your front garden (front paving)

Planning permission

You don't need planning permission to build or replace a driveway of any size if:

- you use permeable (or porous) surfacing, eg gravel, permeable concrete block paving or porous asphalt
- the rainwater flows to a lawn or border to drain naturally

If you cover more than five square metres using traditional materials that don't let water through, you need planning permission.

These rules apply to the area of land between the front walls of the house and the highway.

Paving: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/pavingfrontgarden/>

Building regulations

You don't normally have building regulation approval for paving your front garden. You need to make sure that any changes don't make access more difficult.

For example, changing levels to introduce steps where none existed before won't be allowed.

Paving: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/pavingfrontgarden/>

Porches

Planning permission

You need to apply for planning permission if the porch:
has a floor area bigger than three square metres (measured from the outside)
is higher than three metres above ground level

is less than two metres away from the boundary of a house with a highway (which includes all public roads, footpaths, bridleways and byways)

Porches: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/porch/>

Building regulations

Building regulations do not apply to a porch if it's at ground level and up to 30 square metres big (measured from the outside). The front entrance between the house and the new porch must stay in place. Any access for disabled people must not be affected by the new porch.

All glazing and fixed electrical installations have to follow building regulations.

Porches: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/porch/>

Greener homes

An enclosed space around an external door will help with draught proofing and energy saving.

Radiators

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for installing or replacing radiators. If you live in a listed building you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

If you want to replace a heating or hot water system, you might need to apply for building regulations approval. If you need approval, you may not need to apply before starting the work.

Radiators: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/boilersheating/>

Greener homes

Placing radiators carefully – making sure that they are not blocked by furniture or curtains – and using energy saving models will save you money on your heating costs.

Roof

Planning permission

You don't normally need to apply for planning permission to replace or maintain your roof or to put in roof lights or skylights. Permitted development rights apply so long as you follow certain limits and conditions.

These rights apply only to houses. If you live in a flat and are considering work on your roof, you should contact your local planning authority for guidance.

Sometimes replacing a roof creates more space. In these cases different rules can apply because the project falls under 'roof extensions'.

See information for loft conversion

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/loftconversion/>

If you live in a listed building or designated area (conservation area, national park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, etc), you should check with your local planning authority before starting work.

Roofs: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/roof/>

Building regulations

If you want to repair or re-cover less than 25 per cent of a pitched or flat roof, building regulations do not normally apply.

Building regulations do apply to the following works:

- using a new covering material which increases the weight of the roof by 15 per cent or more
- structural alterations
- using a new covering that reacts differently to fire from the existing material
- If you are replacing or repairing more than 25 per cent of the roof, you normally have to improve thermal insulation. In this case you will need building regulations approval

Roofs: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/roof/>

Protected species

Work on a loft or a roof may affect protected species like bats. You need to consider this when planning the work, and you might need a survey. If bats are using the building, you might need a wildlife licence.

Protected species: contact Natural England for advice

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/default.aspx>

Roof window

Planning permission

You don't normally need to apply for planning permission to insert roof lights or skylights. Permitted development rights apply as long as you follow some limits and conditions.

If you live in a listed building or designated area (conservation area, national park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, etc), you should check with your local planning authority before carrying out any work.

Roof windows: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/roof/>

Building regulations

If you want to install a roof light or roof window, you normally have to comply with building regulations. This is for the following reasons:

- to install a roof light the roof structure will generally need to be changed to create the opening
- the roof will have to carry the weight of the new roof light - if the roof can't do this, it will need to be strengthened
- any window has to have enough insulation against heat loss (ie it is energy efficient)

Where you replace a roof light, you also need building regulations approval.

Roof windows: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/roof/>

Satellite dishes, aerials and antennae

Planning permission

Normal domestic TV and radio aerials don't need planning permission.

In some cases, you need to apply for planning permission to install a satellite dish on your house.

It's your responsibility to make sure that the satellite dish is in the right place.

Satellite dishes etc: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/antenna/>

Building regulations

You don't normally need building regulations approval for satellite dishes etc. Make sure though that the installation is safe and the fixing point stable.

Security alarms

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for installing a security alarm. If you live in a listed building or conservation area, you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

Building regulations approval is not needed for installing a security alarm system.

All electrical work though needs to follow the relevant building regulation rules.

Security alarms: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/electrics/>

Sheds

Planning permission

You can build many kinds of buildings and structures in your garden or on the land around your house without planning permission.

These 'permitted development' projects still have to follow some limits and conditions and in some cases you will need planning permission.

Sheds: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/outbuildings/>

Building regulations

For small detached buildings such as a shed or summerhouse in your garden, building regulations do not normally apply. This is providing that they are smaller than 15 square metres in floor area and have no sleeping accommodation.

Buildings between 15 square metres and 30 square metres without sleeping accommodation don't need building regulations approval so long as they are either:

- at least one metre from any boundary
- constructed of substantially non-combustible materials

Sheds: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/outbuildings/>

Greener homes

It can be greener to build extra space in the garden than it is to extend the existing house

Smoke alarms

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for installing a security alarm. If you live in a listed building or conservation area you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

If you are building a loft conversion, extension or altering the layout of your home, you normally have to follow building regulations (Part B Fire Safety).

You also have to install automatic smoke detectors to all new buildings and loft conversions.

You should ask a professional installer for advice on the kind of smoke alarm you need, and where and how to fit it.

Solar panels (on the ground)

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for installing domestic solar panels as long as you follow some conditions and limits.

You should also think about where you locate the panels so that they generate the most energy possible.

If you live in a listed building, conservation area, national park, area of outstanding natural beauty, etc, you should check with your local planning authority before you start any work.

Solar panels on ground: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/solarpanels/>

Building regulations

You can normally do energy efficiency work without the need for building regulations approval.

You need to follow building regulation rules for all electrical work. You might want to talk to a professional installer for advice.

Solar panels: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/solarpanels/>

Greener homes

Solar panels use energy from the sun to produce water heating (solar thermal) and electricity (solar photovoltaic).

Find out more about solar panels

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Energyandwatersaving/Renewableandlowcarbonenergy/DG_072593

Solar panels (on the roof)

Planning permission

England: In many cases fixing solar panels to your roof is likely to be 'permitted development' with no need to apply for planning permission.

Before starting work you should check the rules and exceptions for solar panels.

Solar panels on roof: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/solarpanels/>

Building regulations

If you want to install a solar panel on your roof, building regulations will normally apply.

You need to make sure that the roof can carry the weight of the panels. In some cases, you might need to strengthen the roof.

Building regulations also apply to other parts of the work, eg electrical installation. You should talk to a professional installer for advice.

Solar panels: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/solarpanels/>

Greener Homes

Solar panels use energy from the sun to produce water heating (solar thermal) and electricity (solar photovoltaic).

Find out more about solar panels

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Energyandwatersaving/Renewableandlowcarbonenergy/DG_072593

Stairs and staircases

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for a new or replacement staircase. If you live in a listed building you may have to apply for listed building consent.

Building regulations

Building regulation rules ask that stairs, ladders and ramps are safe.

Loft conversion

For fire safety reasons you will need to put in a new stair to the new room(s). If there isn't enough room for a full traditional stair, it may be possible to use a "space saving" stair, but you can't use retractable ladders or stairs.

Stairs: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/loftconversion/#Stairs>

Trees and hedges

Planning permission

Many trees are protected by tree preservation orders which means that, in general, you need the council's consent to prune or fell them.

There are also controls over many other trees in conservation areas and other designated areas.

You don't normally need permission to plant a hedge in your garden. And there are no laws that say how high you can grow your hedge. But you are responsible for looking after any hedge on your property and for making sure it is not a nuisance to anyone else. This means trimming the hedge regularly, both its top and all sides.

If you are in any doubt about the status of the trees or hedges you plan to work on you should contact your local council before you start

Trees and hedges: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/trees/hedges/>

High hedges: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/highhedges/>

Underpinning and foundations

Planning permission

You don't normally need planning permission for work to maintain foundations. If you live in a listed building, you should check with your local planning authority.

Building regulations

If you need to underpin all or part of the foundations to your building, you need to comply with building regulations.

The underpinning has to stabilise the movement of the building. You have to think about any sewers and drains near the work that might be affected.

Underpinning and foundations: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/underpinning/>

Unimproved loft space

Planning permission

You don't need planning permission for boarding out your loft for storage

Building regulations

In most homes, the timber joists that form the 'floor' of the loft can't support a heavy weight.

If you decide to lay flooring boards over the existing joists, you might need to comply with building regulations. Talk to the building control department in your local council before you start work.

Loft alterations: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/loftconversion/>

Protected species

Work on a loft or a roof may affect protected species like bats. You need to consider this when planning the work, and you might need a survey. If bats are using the building, you might need a wildlife licence.

Protected species: contact Natural England

<http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/regulation/wildlife/default.aspx>

Windows and doors

Planning permission

You don't normally need to apply for planning permission for:

- repairs, maintenance or minor improvements, such as painting frames or replacing windows
- putting in windows, skylights or roof lights (although a new bay window will be treated as an extension)

These projects are permitted developments.

Sometimes you may need to apply for planning permission for some of these works because your council has withdrawn permitted development rights. If you live in a listed building, you will need listed building consent for any major indoor or outdoor works.

If you want to change the windows in your flat you should talk to your local planning authority first. Each council has different rules for this kind of work.

If you are a leaseholder, you may first need to get permission from your landlord, freeholder or management company.

Windows and doors: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/doorswindows/>

Building regulations

Different rules apply for work on windows and doors.

You need building regulations approval if:

- you are replacing the whole of the fixed frame and opening parts or creating new openings for windows or doors
- you are replacing external doors with 50 per cent glazing or more
- You don't normally need building regulations approval if:
 - the work amounts to no more than, for example, replacing broken glass, rotten sashes or rotten sections of the main frame
 - the contractor replacing the windows and doors is registered with a self-certification scheme

Windows and doors: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/doorswindows/>

Greener homes

New external windows and doors must meet certain heat loss standards to comply with building regulations.

Windows and doors: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/planning/greenerhomes/energysaving/glazing>

Wind turbines (on the wall or roof)

Planning permission

Under new permitted development rights which came into force on 1 December 2011, in some cases it will be possible to install domestic wind turbines without the need for an application for planning permission, so long as specified limits and conditions are met.

In other cases you will need to apply for planning permission from your local authority to add a domestic wind turbine to your house, or grounds surrounding your home.

Other factors might affect how much energy the turbine can generate. For example, wind speeds in your area, surrounding structures (eg houses), trees, mountains or hills.

Wind turbines: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/windturbines/>

Building regulations

Building regulations may apply if the turbine is attached to a building.

The government encourages using wind turbines and microgeneration systems. But you must show that any construction follows the building regulation rules for structural and electrical safety.

You have to submit a building notice to your local authority for putting up a wind turbine.

Wind turbines: find out more on the Planning Portal

<http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/permission/commonprojects/windturbines/>

Greener homes

Wind turbines use the wind to rotate blades that turn a rotor. This creates electricity.

Wind turbines: find out more

http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Environmentandgreenerliving/Energyandwatersaving/Renewableandlowcarbonenergy/DG_072626