

## **Local Authority Building Control**

### Technical Information Note 7

## **The Role of Building Control and the Building Regulations**

## **What are the Building Regulations?**

The Building Regulations are national standards for design and construction, which apply to most types of building whether in the home or a commercial development, new building or alterations to an existing building\*.

These regulations aim to ensure that buildings which people occupy or have access to, are safe, healthy, sustainable and convenient, for both current and future generations. They set out minimum standards that cover items such as structural stability, fire safety, drainage, ventilation, energy conservation and accessibility.

## **What is the role of Building Control?**

The role of Building Control is to ensure that these regulations are enforced within East Cambs. We try and do this by offering help and guidance, but ultimately if required we can take formal enforcement action to ensure compliance.

As part of our role in helping and guiding customers towards compliance we provide the following services:

- a checking service of both the plans and details submitted as well as inspections of the work on site,
- support and advice to customers on how to end up with the result they want, while still complying with the regulations, but we are not a substitute for a professional designer and construction adviser.
- ensuring as far as reasonably practical that all building standards which are set in the interests of the wider public good have been complied with at completion of the project.

## **What Building Control cannot do?**

There is a widely held misconception that Building Control is responsible for complying with the regulations and will check and guarantee that a building is free of all defects. This is not so, and we cannot do the following:

- act as a 'Clerk of Works' monitoring every stage of the construction process on site. That is a matter for the contracts and arrangements put in place between client and builder.
- address issues such as the finish and aesthetics of the final project where these are not Building Regulations standards – these are a matter for designers, builders, and new home warranty providers.
- offer protection to a client in a contract with a builder. This is a matter of contract law.

Ultimately, compliance is the responsibility of the person carrying out the work. This could be the owner, who has commissioned the work or the builder they have employed this will depend upon the contract and arrangements put in place between the parties.