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The District Council Offices  
textphone number is  
**01727 819570**. The service is  
for customers with a hearing  
impairment.

এই পলিকলেটে যে তথ্য দেওয়া হয়েছে যদি আপনি  
আরও বুঝার সাহায্য চান তবে  
কোল্ করুন Telephone: 01727 866100

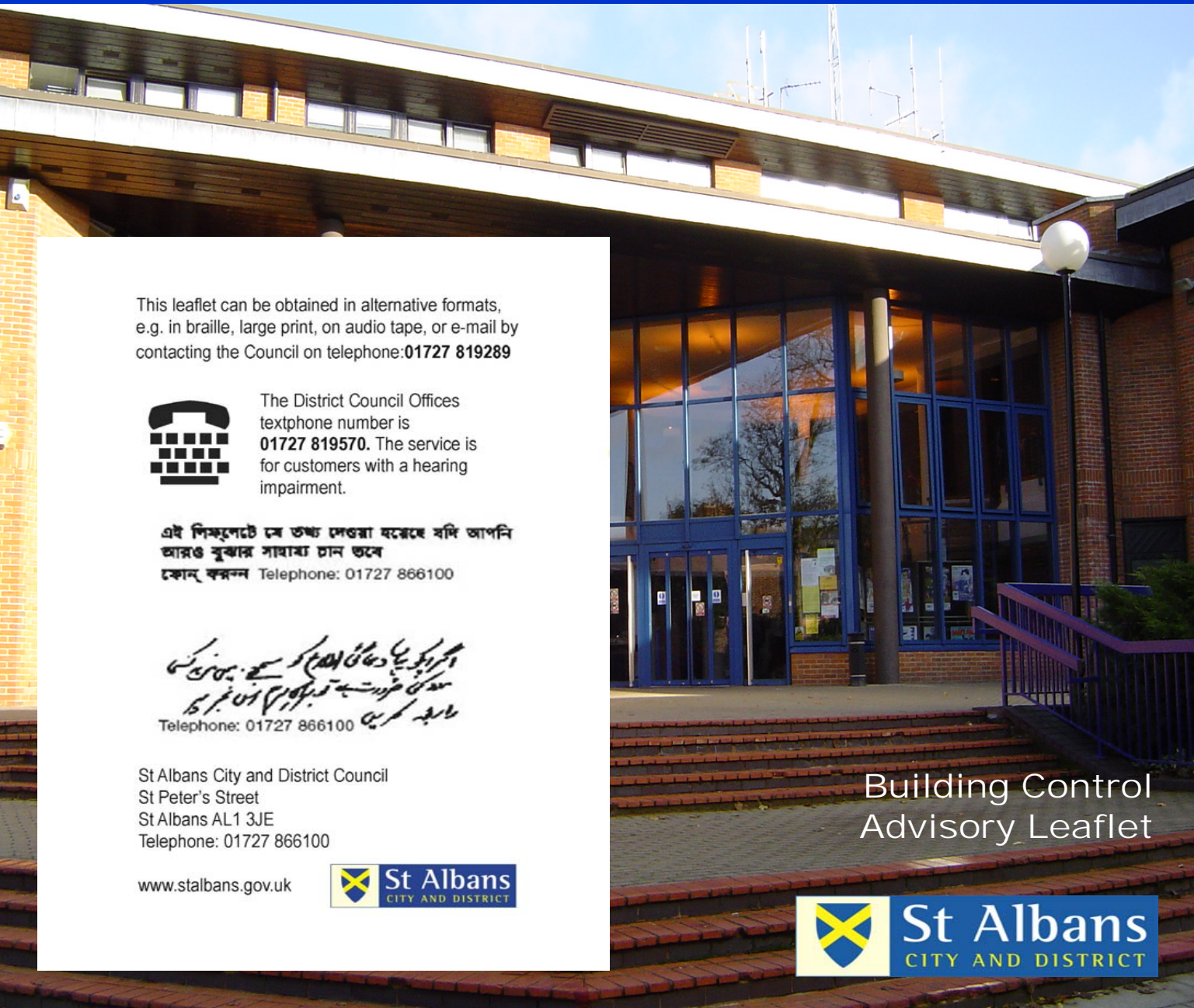
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St Albans City and District Council  
St Peter's Street  
St Albans AL1 3JE  
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[www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk)



## Building Control Advisory Leaflet



## YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY BUILDING CONTROL SERVICE

### For health and safety in buildings

Building control is the process by which any new building work – whether for a house, office, factory or home extension – is checked to ensure that it is designed and built to exacting standards. These standards are laid down by government in the Building Regulations 2000, and the checks are carried out by building control officers. The aim is to ensure the health and safety of everyone working or living in and around buildings – and that includes you.

New building works, with some limited exceptions, must meet the safety standards in the Building Regulations. Building control officers check that the building is safe by examining the suitability and strength of all parts of the building, from foundations to roof. They also check to minimise the risk of injury in the event of fire. The Building Regulations also cover health and safety standards. Building control officers ensure that, amongst other things, the building is adequately insulated and ventilated, that it has enough windows, is damp-proofed and that chimneys and boilers do not give off poisonous fumes.

### Professional expertise

The roots of Local Authority building control go back over 100 years. During this time, Local Authorities have accumulated a wealth of local knowledge and experience, including a thorough understanding of ground conditions, historical information on what land has been used for in the past, and records showing the location of foul and surface water sewers.

Local Authority building control officers are highly trained in all aspects of construction. They are professional, impartial and publicly accountable. Building control officers enjoy a close liaison with other Local Authority services such as planning and environmental health, and other organisations such as the Highways Authority and Thames Water, and are therefore able to provide a comprehensive public service.

## Better building for all

Local Authority building control provides a safeguard for everyone.

- ❑ Householders making improvements to their property have the assurance that where work comes under the scope of the Building Regulations, it is designed and constructed properly by the builder.
- ❑ House buyers have the confidence that the building plans have been approved and that the site work has been regularly and thoroughly inspected by trained officers, who act independently of any commercial interest.
- ❑ Builders are given a flexible, professional and technically sound local service that is tailored to their needs.
- ❑ Solicitors can advise their clients with confidence, knowing that the houses they are conveyancing have been thoroughly inspected by an impartial expert.
- ❑ Building societies and life assurance companies appreciate the added security that only Local Authority building control can give.
- ❑ Factory and office workers can feel secure in the knowledge that the new buildings they work in have been built with health and safety in mind.

### Accountable and impartial

Only Local Authority building control is accountable to the public through an elected Council. If you are dissatisfied with the service you are given, you can take up the matter with your councillor or Local Authority. It is this accountability that is your safeguard against a reduction in building standards.

Only Local Authorities have the power to apply legal sanctions if Building Regulations are not observed.

Only Local Authorities are entrusted to undertake building control for all types of building – houses, office blocks, factories and home extensions. This trust is your assurance of a highly professional service with a wide range of technical experience.

Local Authorities also provide advice on all manner of subjects that affect new building work, such as advice on ground conditions,

foundation design, drainage works, structural considerations, suitable materials and accepted building practice.

## Inspection and approval

There are two ways in which construction work can be approved as meeting the Building Regulations.

1. *Full Plans* of the work are examined and approved if they meet the Building Regulations.
2. Alternatively, in many cases, builders may start work 48 hours after they have provided the Local Authority with a site plan and a *Building Notice*. This quick turnaround is particularly useful on small projects.

Under both systems, the buildings are inspected during construction. However, if the former Full Plans procedure is used, and inspecting officers are satisfied that the building has been built to the required standards, Local Authorities may issue a Completion Certificate. This is your assurance that building work has been carried out to the highest standards, based on a professional, impartial and publicly accountable service. If a Completion Certificate is not issued, there could be legal difficulties when you come to sell your property.

## Efficient and effective

Local Authorities throughout England and Wales have combined forces to offer National Type approval. The scheme enables approval for individual house designs certified by one Authority to be automatically accepted by other Authorities. The scheme is co-ordinated by LANTAC, the Local Authority National Type Approval Confederation.

## Contacting your local building control service

At St Albans City and District Council, in addition to our fax facility (01727 845658), Building Control staff are available for consultation between the hours of 9am and 10.30am and 3.15pm and 4.45pm on weekdays, and at other times by prior appointment. Telephone: 01727 819289 or 819218.

## Our service charter

A safe, healthy and accessible environment is the objective of the Council's Building Control Department.

### We:

- ensure a prompt, professional and courteous service to all our customers;
- aim to sustain and improve the quality of the Building Control services provided to our customers by achieving the aims and objectives set by management;
- conduct regular customer care surveys to ensure that the service is geared to customer requirements;

### By:

- giving free pre-application advice and guidance on all Building Regulation related design aspects;
- aiming to issue a decision on your application within the relevant statutory period;
- making prompt site inspections, which can be programmed to your requirements;
- giving advice and guidance on work in progress;
- issuing a Completion Certificate on satisfactory completion of the work;
- providing a schedule of defects where necessary for building work requiring further attention following inspections;
- dealing with reports of dangerous structures as soon as possible.

## Further information

This advisory leaflet is intended to be a helpful and useful source of information and not binding on any party. The Council offers no guarantee or warranties concerning the accuracy of the information supplied. For more information about the contents of this leaflet contact:

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