

# The planning enforcement customer charter



Aylesbury Vale District Council has adopted an Enforcement Plan which sets out the purpose of the Council's planning enforcement service and how it will be delivered to the community. As part of the Enforcement Plan we set the service standards that apply when we are investigating or dealing with suspected breaches of planning controls. These standards are set out below.

## General

- Everyone (complainants and persons suspected of a breach) will receive the same standard of courteous and impartial professional service at all times.
- We will deal with breaches of planning control in a manner reflecting the degree of harm caused.
- Proven breaches which cause harm will be vigorously pursued, and where necessary, we will take formal action appropriate and commensurate to the breach and follow this through to conclusion.

## Complainants

- We will hold your personal details in the strictest confidence.
- Complaints/enquiries will be acknowledged in writing within 3 working days of receipt, giving the name and email address of the investigating officer.
- If we cannot deal with a complaint we will if appropriate pass it on to the relevant service in this Council, or County Council, or advise you of the body you should contact.
- We will work closely with other parts of the Council and the County Council to share information and to ensure that best use is made of the available powers.
- We aim within 5 weeks to reach a decision on whether a breach of planning control has occurred, and if so, to decide on the course of action to be taken.
- We will update complainants in writing at key stages/events for example;- the decision on action, submission of a retrospective application, authorisation of enforcement action and issue of notices.
- If we conclude that there is no breach or decide not to take action we will clearly explain the reason.
- We will not allow the voluntary resolution of a breach to become unreasonably protracted, and will set and monitor timescales for action.

## Persons suspected of a breach

- Where we identify a breach of planning control we will write to the owner/occupier and state clearly the alleged breach that has occurred, the options and timescale available to resolve it and what will happen if matters are not put right.
- We will give the owner/occupier an initial opportunity to resolve matters through negotiation.
- Where we invite an application and it is submitted within the timescale set, we will usually suspend enforcement action pending its determination.
- We will advise the owner/occupier in writing when a decision is taken to authorise formal action.
- We will be open to meaningful negotiations to remedy a breach even after formal action has been commenced.

## Comments

We hope you will be satisfied with the service we provide to you. If you wish to make a suggestion as to how we can improve our service please use the Council's Comments, Compliments or Complaints service. We are committed to improving our service and dealing promptly with any shortcomings.