

Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are designated by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). They are defined by the DCMS as buildings of 'special architectural or historical interest'. These can also include structures such as bridges, milestones, walls and even telephone boxes.

The legislation surrounding listed buildings is the same no matter what grading the building receives. Listed buildings are categorised into 3 'grades':

Grade I

Grade I listed buildings are deemed to be of exceptional interest. Examples of Grade I listed buildings include castles, churches and large country manor houses.

Grade II

This is the most common grade with circa 86% of listed buildings falling into this category. These buildings are deemed to be of 'special interest'.

Special Grade II

This is awarded to Grade II buildings with some additional merit, e.g. a unique interior, that are not exceptional enough to warrant a Grade I listing.

Those who own or carry out work on a listed building must be especially careful not to adversely impact the integrity of the building. As a result, there are restrictions on both internal and external alterations to the building, as well as works to certain outbuildings within the curtilage of the building. All planned works will require listed building consent from the local council prior to carrying out the said works. Listed building consent will be in addition to your planning permission.

If works are however carried out without the necessary, relevant consent then you may be given a substantial fine or even imprisoned. For this reason you must always consult your local authority before carrying out any work on a listed building or even in a conservation area.

Legal Requirements

Listed buildings must always be kept wind and watertight, structurally sound and in a reasonable state of repair. If a listed building is neglected by its owner, section 48 of the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990 permits the council to serve a 'repairs notice' on the owner outlining the work required to rectify it. If the owner does not carry out the repairs within a specified time, then the council can compulsorily acquire the building in order to prevent escalation of any disrepair. If a listed building is either unoccupied or partly occupied, s.54 of the 1990 act allows councils to serve an 'urgent work notice' to carry out work on the building and recoup any costs from the building's owner.

Historic England

Historic England are a body responsible for giving advice on ancient monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas in England and they must be consulted by the council about any applications relating to these. Some of the advice that Historic England offers includes their Charter for Advisory Services which explains how they handle requests for pre and post application planning advice. While Historic England can offer assistance, the local conservation officer at your local council is best placed to offer you advice on any proposal concerning a listed building or conservation area and should in all instances, be your first contact.