

Enforcement





Enforcement

This guide is one of a series of leaflets that will provide information and advice on the services offered by the Directorate of Development and Renewal. In addition the Directorate offers a wide range of other services from Building Control, Access to Employment, Inward Investment and Major Projects including Transport Infrastructure. Housing services are also now part of Development and Renewal. For an introduction to these services please access the Council's website (address on back of leaflet). This guide covers the following:

1. What is planning enforcement?
2. When is enforcement possible?
3. Should enforcement action be taken?
3. Reporting a planning breach.
5. What happens next?
6. Further Information.

Tower Hamlets is a Borough rich in history and presents a vibrant mix of old and new, a bustling community unique in culture and character. This guide explains how Tower Hamlets aims to protect the built environment through the enforcement process.

1. What is Planning Enforcement?

Most types of development, such as building works or changes of use, require planning permission from the Council. In the event that somebody carries out works without getting the correct permission or consent, enforcement action may be taken.

Planning legislation seeks to strike a balance between a land owners' freedom to alter their property as they wish whilst at the same time protecting the environment of their neighbours and conserving historic buildings and conservation areas. Therefore, whilst the Council takes a serious view of unauthorised and illegal works, it will make every attempt to reach an agreement with owners/occupiers on how the breach of planning control can be satisfactorily dealt with prior to using its legal powers.





2. When is Enforcement Possible?

The objective of the enforcement team is to provide a comprehensive and fair service. We will investigate and can take action against the following complaints and the most common ones include the following:

- Unauthorised changes of use i.e. residential to commercial use without planning permission.
- Unauthorised development i.e. construction of a building without planning permission.
- Breaches of planning condition.
- Putting up unauthorised advertisement hoardings and signs.
- Unauthorised works to a listed building.
- Unauthorised demolition in a conservation area.
- Failure to repair and maintain a listed building.
- Unauthorised works to a protected tree.
- Land adversely affecting neighbourhood amenity, such as untidy sites.

3. Should Enforcement Action Be Taken?

The enforcement system is complicated and it should be noted that even when enforcement action can technically be taken the Council has to decide in each case whether formal enforcement action would be 'expedient'. If a breach has occurred the Council has the following options:

- 'No further action' where the breach is thought to cause little or no harm.
- Enforcement notice to remove the breach.
- When the harm is so severe as to warrant immediate action a stop notice may be issued.
- Asking for a planning application if this is likely to be approved.
- Negotiation to sort out breaches. Government advice is that formal action should be seen as a last resort.

4. Reporting a Planning Breach



When reporting a planning breach you should provide your name, address and contact details. The name and address of those informing us of a possible breach will be kept confidential.

It is important that you provide as much information as possible about the suspected breach as possible. This could include when activities or building work began and contact details of those involved.

5. What Happens Next?

If you have reported a potential breach of planning control you will be sent an acknowledgement letter from the Council informing you of the name and contact telephone number of the Enforcement Officer who will be dealing with the case. The Enforcement Officer will visit the site, records will be checked and, if necessary, more information asked for. You will be informed once the Council has decided on what action to take and the alleged offender(s) will be notified in writing of the likely course of action.

The Council will investigate all reported breaches of planning control, but gives highest priority to:

- Unauthorised development that causes serious and irreparable harm to the amenities of a neighbourhood or other interest or any unauthorised development causing severe disturbance to neighbours.

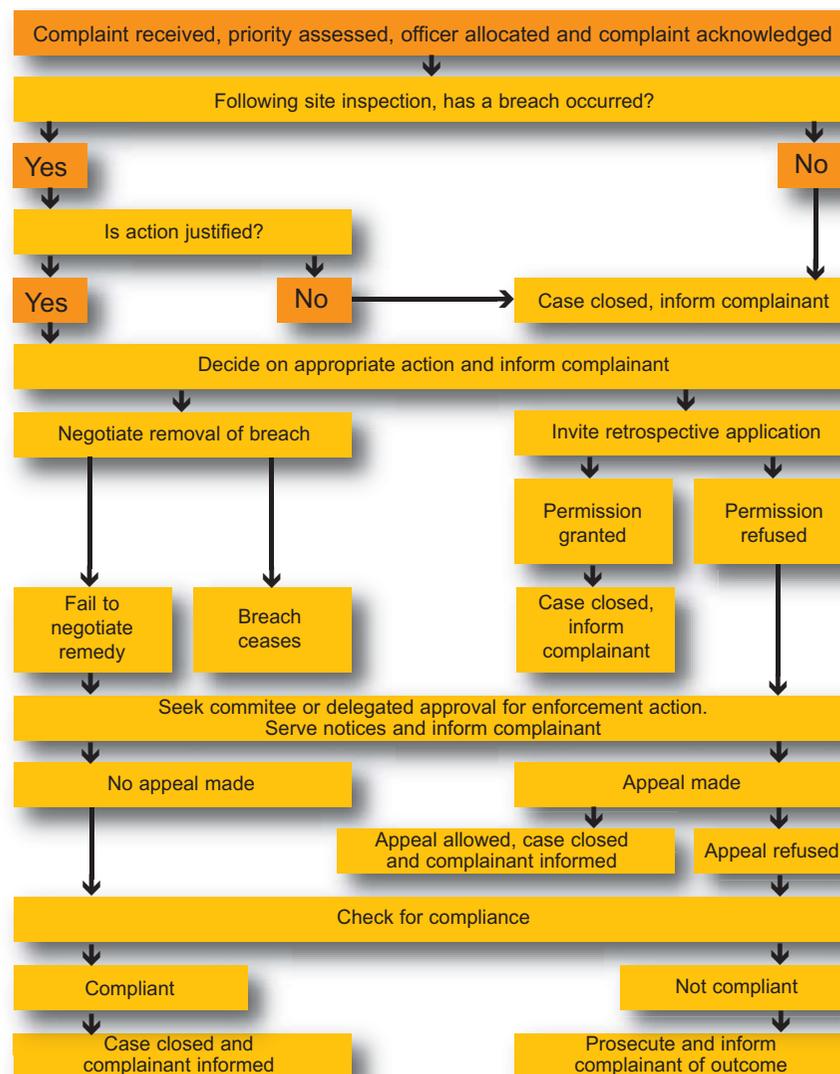
Second priority is given to:

- A breach causing significant harm to the amenities of a neighbourhood.
- Breaches that are contrary to the development plan or where the time limit for taking enforcement action is about to expire.
- Situations where cumulative breaches are likely to cause serious harm in terms of amenity or undermine policy objectives.



Lower priority complaints are:

- Breaches of conditions unless covered above.
- Breaches where there is judged to be minimal harm to the Council's planning objectives and policies.
- Breaches where planning permission would be likely to be granted.



For translation phone:



Albanian	Për përkthim, telefono:	Lithuanian	Vertimui, skambinkite:
Amharic	ለባዘፀ እንዲተረጎምልህ ብትሻ ይህን ስልክ ይውል	Malayalam	പരിഭാഷക്കായി വിളിക്കുക
Arabic	:للترجمة ، اتصل:	Polish	Po tłumaczenie, zadzwoń pod:
Bengali/Sylheti	অনুবাদের জন্য টেলিফোন করুন :	Portuguese	Para tradução, telefone:
Chinese	如欲索取翻譯，請致電：	Punjabi	ਤਰਜਮੇ ਲਈ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ:
Croatian/Serbian	Za prijevod, nazovite:	Russian	Для перевода, позвоните под номер:
Czech	Pro překlad volejte:	Somali	Wixii turjumid ah, wac:
Farsi	:برای ترجمه با تلفن زیر تماس بگیرید:	Spanish	Para traducción, telefonée:
French	Pour obtenir une traduction, veuillez appeler :	Swahili	Piga namba hii ili upate makaratasi yaliyotafsiriwa:
Greek	Για μετάφραση, τηλεφωνήστε	Turkish	Tercüme İçin, Telefon
Gujarati	તરજૂમા માટે ફોન કરો:	Twi	Se won te brofo na wo pe mboa, fre me
Hindi	अनुवाद के लिए फोन करें:	Urdu	:ترجمے کیلئے فون کریں:
Japanese	翻訳に関する電話は :	Vietnamese	Muốn bản phiên dịch, gọi số:
Kurdish	:تەلەیفون بو تە رجومه	Yoruba	Fun itumọ ede, ẹ pẹwa si ẹrọ-ibanisọrọ yi:

020 7364 5009

Also for large print, audio or braille

6. Further Information

The Council encourages and welcomes pre-application discussions with the community and businesses and can provide further detailed guidance by contacting 020 7364 5009.

More details about this area is available on the Council's website at: www.towerhamlets.gov.uk/data/planning/data/general-advice/data/planning-enforcement.cfm

Alternatively, you may wish to visit the Council's website www.towerhamlets.gov.uk for further general information.



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