

What is a Listed Building?

A "Listed Building" is a building which has been recognised formally for its special architectural or historic interest. It can also include a building or structure within the curtilage of the listed building. Listed Buildings have legal protection under planning law, specifically "The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990". This legislation results in the need to obtain listed building consent for works of demolition, alteration or extension which affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest.

Listed Buildings on the Isle of Wight

There are almost 2,500 listed buildings on the Isle of Wight. There are a rich variety of architectural styles ranging from the simple vernacular cottages (built from local materials) to grand Regency town houses and not forgetting the plentiful Victorian splendour. Materials vary from highly decorative polychromatic (coloured) brickwork to smooth, crisp stucco (render), or finely crafted dressed stonework and more rugged random local stone construction. Roofs are generally natural slate or hand made clay tile but there are a number of thatched properties that also contribute greatly.

Classification of Listed Buildings

The classification is as follows:

Grade I

These are buildings of exceptional interest (only about 2% of Listed Buildings are in this grade).

Grade II*

These are particularly important buildings of more than special interest (some 4% of Listed Buildings).

Grade II

These are buildings of special interest which warrant every effort being made to preserve them (most listed buildings on the island fall into this grade, and range from large public buildings to small cottages and some telephone kiosks).

How are buildings chosen for listing?

All properties are judged according to a set of national criteria approved by English Heritage. In choosing buildings there is also a set of criteria that receives particular attention, such as age and rarity. Once listed the buildings are classified into grades to show their relative importance but this does not, however, mean that a Grade II is less significant than Grade II* or I.

Requests to list buildings can be made by anyone and these should be sent directly to English Heritage. Just send a description, location plan and some current photographs to them, explaining why you think the building merits inclusion and they will consider the case.

How much of the building is actually listed?

All of it, inside and out. Contrary to popular belief, there is no such thing as just a 'listed facade' or 'listed interior'. The list description in the official List is not intended to provide a comprehensive record of all the features of importance - but merely identifies the building. Anything fixed to a Listed Building is also listed. And any structure in the grounds which was there before 1948 (even if not fixed to the Listed Building) is itself likely to be listed. This is likely to include boundary/garden walls and gates and railings. In addition, the setting of a Listed Building is often an important factor when new development or extensions are being considered.

What is listed building consent?

A Listed Building must not be demolished, extended or altered in any way that affects its character without having been granted Listed Building Consent. This is a control which the Council has in addition to any planning permission that may be required. If such works are desired listed building consent application forms are available from the Council and should be submitted with sufficient information to adequately assess the works proposed and the effect they may have upon the buildings special architectural or historic interest. This will involve writing a full justification, which itself is a necessity for such an

application. In addition to public consultation, English Heritage and certain Amenity groups may also be consulted before deciding the application.

Listed Building Consent is necessary for all works of alteration, extension or demolition whether inside or out. This includes small changes to individual windows, doors, interior walls, fireplaces and stairways even if they are not considered to be "original". This will also generally include garden walls, gates, porches, balconies, verandahs and ancillary buildings. The painting of the exterior may also require Listed Building Consent if it affects the building's character, as will the re-pointing or painting of brickwork. Sand blasting (or similar method) as a method of cleaning old timbers or brickwork also requires consent and is rarely permitted because of the irreversible damage which it invariably causes to the historic fabric.

It is a criminal offence to permit or undertake works to demolish, alter or extend a listed building without obtaining listed building consent or to undertake works not in accordance with approved plans. The penalties for this can be heavy - usually in the form of a fine up to a maximum of £20,000.00 or imprisonment up to six months.

Minor changes to listed buildings

Even changes that may seem to be minor are likely to be considered as an alteration, extension or demolition in the context of Listed Buildings. These include:

Alteration or replacement of any door or window inside or out and whether "original", a later alteration, or recent.

Removal of internal walls or partitions of whatever date or construction.

Changes to roofing materials.

Painting or rendering of brickwork.

Cleaning of brickwork.

Changes to external cladding materials such as weather boarding or rendering.

Insertion of skylights or "velux" type roof lights.

Removal of chimneys or fireplaces even when not in use.

Cleaning or stripping of timbers.

Any extensions or additions including conservatories.

The above list is not comprehensive and if you are in any doubt whatsoever please contact the Conservation & Design Team before carrying out the work. It could save you from legal proceedings and a substantial penalty.

What about Repairs?

All buildings (old ones especially) need repair at some time. The small-scale replacement in replica of worn out elements is classed as 'repair' and Listed Building Consent may not be required. However, it is essential to check with the Conservation & Design Team because the scale of this work may sometimes necessitate formal consent.

There is a strong presumption in favour of incremental repairs rather than replacement to preserve as much original fabric as possible. It is surprising how much can be kept if this approach is adopted and this can save you money. This particularly applies to structural timbers, doors, windows and old roofing tiles.

What if I let my listed building deteriorate?

Owners have a legal responsibility to look after Listed Buildings properly. Regular maintenance and modest expenditure on repairs on a regular basis can prevent very serious problems (e.g. timber decay) from developing. It is particularly important to check rainwater disposal systems every winter as this can save you a lot of expense and prevent serious deterioration.

However, for a variety of reasons some Listed Buildings can fall into serious disrepair and the Council has powers which it uses in such cases. These are called Urgent Works and Repairs Notices and their effect is to require certain works or repairs to be carried out on the building concerned, within a given time. If the owner does not undertake the work the

Council can carry them out itself and recover the costs, through the Courts if necessary, from the owner. The Council is reluctant to use these powers, but will when necessary to ensure the long term survival of any Listed Building in its area.

What about VAT?

Some works on certain types of Listed Buildings enjoy a favourable position regarding the payment of Value Added Tax. Repairs to listed buildings are subject to VAT at the standard rate. Alterations to Listed Buildings which are dwellings or used for non business charity purposes, together with those that are being converted to such uses are zero rated for the purposes of VAT, provided the work is done by a VAT registered builder and with Listed Building Consent. For more details contact the Customs and Excise Office. Tel: 0845 010 9000.

Further information.

There are many publications regarding the correct repair of historic buildings. Useful contacts include:

Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings 37 Spital Square London E1 6DY	The Victorian Society 1 Priory Gardens Bedford Park London W4 1TT
The Georgian Group 6 Fitzroy Square London W1P 5DX	C20th Society 70 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6EJ

Listed Building owners should be aware that owning such a building means holding it in trust to protect its architectural and historic features for the generations to come. Further advice can be obtained from the Conservation & Design Team at: Seaclose Offices, Fairlee Road, Newport, Isle of Wight. PO30 2QS
Telephone: 01983 823552

www.iwight.com/conservation

Leaflet: CON4

CONSERVATION

LISTED BUILDINGS



PLANNING SERVICES