



Inverclyde council

Building Standards

Annual Verification Performance

1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024

Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Reviewed	Summary of changes
1.0	16.05.2024	DH	First draft of report
1.1	05.06.2024	DH	Final draft for review
1.2	06.06.2024	DH	Published report

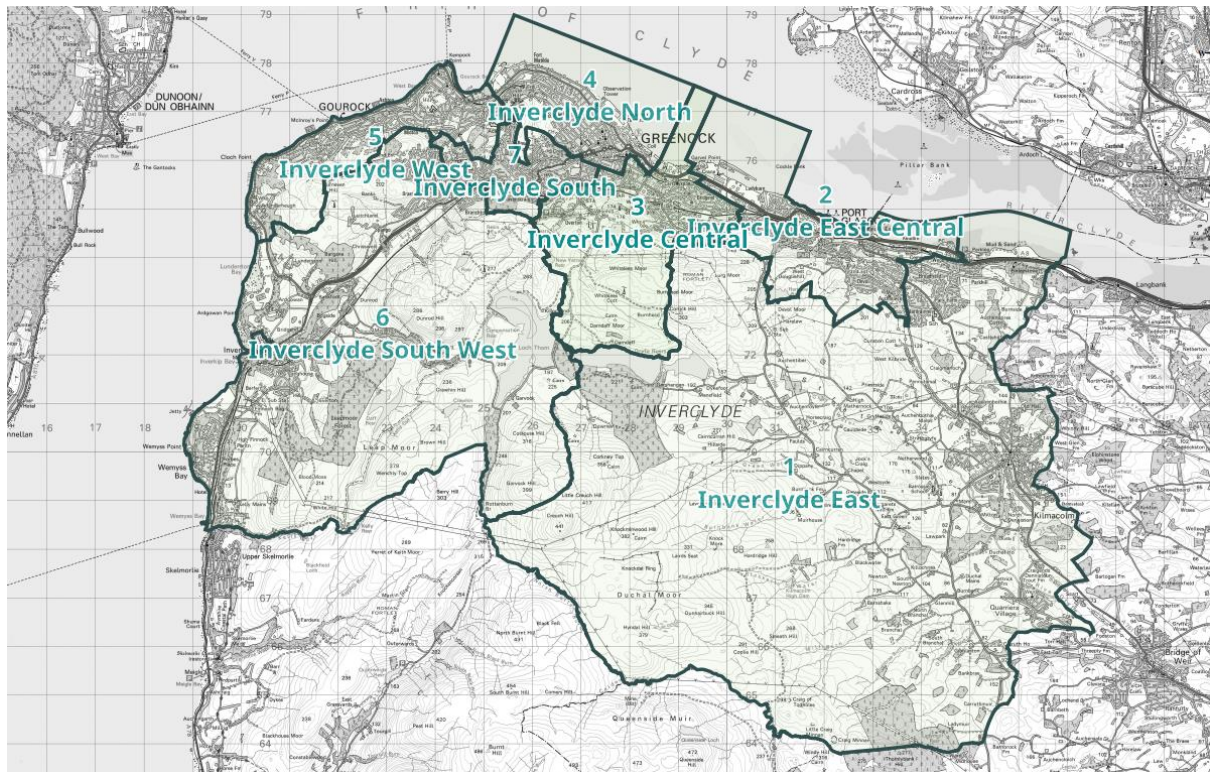
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1. Introduction to the Verifier

1.1 The verification performance report is a strategic planning and management tool that provides information about the local authority building standards service, communicates the vision and strategy, and sets out performance against strategic goals and targets.

1.2 Building standards verifiers in Scotland are required to utilise the performance report to manage, monitor, review and develop strategies for their business, and should focus on the performance framework's core perspectives and cross-cutting themes.



1.3 Data from the 2022 census indicates that the current population of Inverclyde is estimated to be 78,340 people across an area of 158 km².

1.4 Inverclyde has the advantage of having many urbanised areas along the coastal reaches of the River Clyde and is accessible to the relatively undeveloped countryside and upland moors of the Regional Park. An area of unrivalled scenic beauty, Inverclyde has breathtaking views north to the Argyll Hills and southern Highlands.

1.5 Five conservation areas and 235 Listed Buildings indicate the quality and variety in the built environment of Inverclyde, identified for their architectural and/or historic character. These attractions, including museums, galleries, stately homes and castles, celebrate Inverclyde's maritime and industrial past.

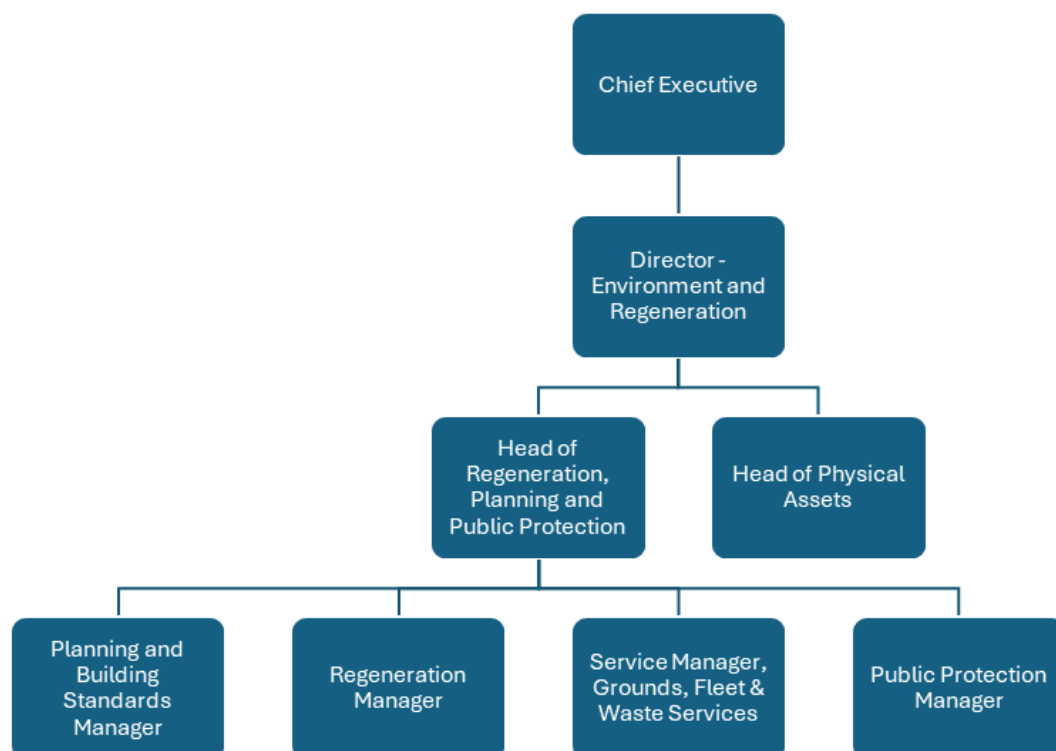
1.6 The Inverclyde area benefits from excellent transport and infrastructure, with the M8 motorway just 2.5 km from Inverclyde's eastern boundary giving direct access to Glasgow and the rest of Scotland's transport network, and to England. Glasgow International Airport is a short 20-to-30-minute drive from the centre of Inverclyde, whilst extensive rail and ferry terminals provide connections to Glasgow, and to the North Ayrshire coast, with onward ferry links to Argyll and Bute.

1.7 The largest settlement within Inverclyde is the town of Greenock, which benefits from a deep-water port and shipping container terminal. Ocean Terminal in Greenock, opened in August 2023, is a successful road-sea freight interchange of international significance, and a port of call for the world's largest cruise ships. Both the port and shipping container terminal are a key source of economic growth for the area and a large source of employment. The local area also boasts a rich history from its industrial ship building past, an industry which still exists today in the Port Glasgow area of Inverclyde providing employment to many of the area's citizens.

1.8 The Building Standards Team within Inverclyde Council comprises of six professional staff supported by a shared pool of 2.5 FTE administrative support. In addition to statutory duties in administering building warrants and completion certificates, the service is responsible for the management of enforcement action for unauthorised works, defective buildings and dangerous buildings. The Building Standards Service also act as a non-statutory consultee for licensing applications, planning applications and any other application relevant to development.

1.9 The Building Standards service forms part of the Environment and Regeneration directorate. Under the scheme of delegation, the Director of Environment and Regeneration is responsible for all duties under relevant Building Standards legislation (i.e. Building (Scotland) Act 2003), with delegated authority also with the Head of Regeneration, Planning and Public Protection and to the Planning and Building Standards Service Manager.

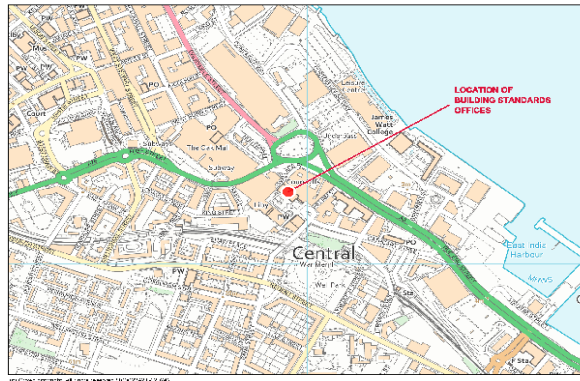
Organisation Chart



2. Building Standards Verification Service Information

Office Location

2.1 The Building Standards service for Inverclyde Council is based in the Municipal Buildings, Clyde Square, Greenock PA15 1LY. The office includes a walk-in customer service counter and meeting rooms which are available for customer meetings by appointment.



2.2 During the 2023/24 year, Inverclyde Council formally adopted a hybrid working policy for all Council employees. As such, Building Standards staff work from the office and from home on a flexible basis. All Building Standards staff are contactable by mobile phone, regardless of location, and use Microsoft Teams for video call meetings and remote video inspections (RVIs) where appropriate.

Verification Services and Functions

2.3 The purpose of the Building Standards system is to protect the public interest. The system sets out the minimum standards which must be adhered to when building work or conversion of a building takes place in order to meet the building regulations.

2.4 The Building Standards service are responsible for undertaking independent checks on building warrant applications through reasonable inquiry. The extent of scrutiny applied to plan assessment and site inspections is determined by a risk assessment of the scale and complexity of the building work which is proposed.

2.5 The Building Standards service are not responsible for the monitoring of progress of works on site or for the monitoring of quality. This is a matter for the owner/applicant to appoint a suitably qualified person to oversee the wider development.

2.6 Building Standards verifiers are appointed by Scottish Ministers and are responsible for checking applications for building warrants to construct or demolish buildings, to provide services, fittings or equipment in buildings or for conversions.

2.7 Inverclyde Council's Building Standards service are responsible for a wider range of services and functions. Many of these services are required by statute, others undertaken as a non-statutory consultee of partner services within the Council.

2.8 The Building Standards service is responsible for the following duties:

- Assessment of building warrant applications under Section 8 to 16 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003

- Assessment of completion certificates under Section 17 to 21 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003
- Enforcement action under Sections 25 – 30 of the Building (Scotland) Act 2003, including 24 hour out of hours call out throughout the year. Enforcement action predominantly relates to and includes
 - Building Warrant Enforcement Notice (Section 27)
 - Defective Buildings (Section 28)
 - Dangerous Buildings (Section 29 and 30)
- Safety at Sports Ground legislation for Greenock Morton Football Club under the Safety at Sports Ground Act 1976.
- Inspection of temporary structures for events under Section 89 of the Civic Government (Scotland) Act 1982
- Non statutory consultation and inspection of licensed premises for occasional, entertainment and premises licences under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005.
- Non statutory consultation and inspection of HMO and short-term lets.
- Non statutory consultee on selected planning applications
- Letters of comfort, property enquiry certificates and historic searches.
- Copying of plans and relevant information contained within Part II of the Building Standards register.

Public Interest Statement:

2.9 The purpose of the building standards system is to protect the public interest. The system sets out the essential standards that are required to be met when building work or conversion of a building takes place in order to meet building regulations.

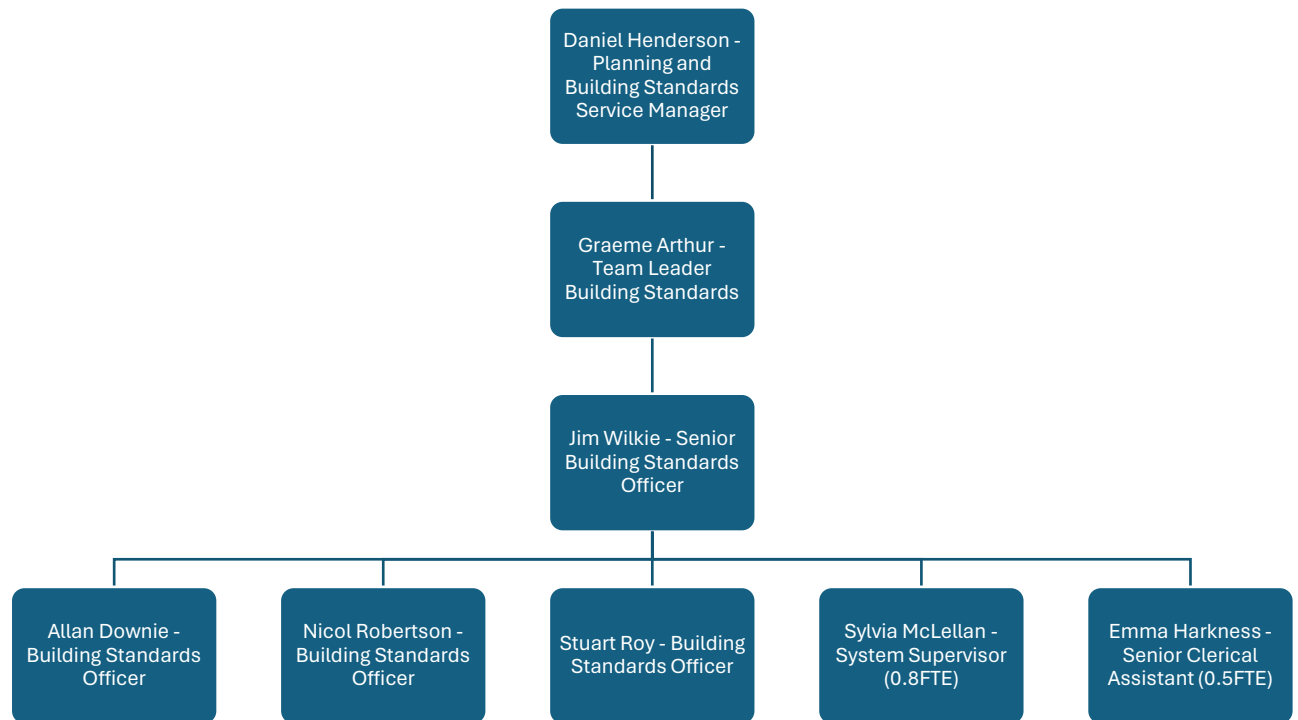
2.10 The building standards system checks that proposed building work or conversion of a building meets standards; inspections are limited to a minimal necessary to ensure that legislation is not avoided. The control of work on site is not the responsibility of Building Standards but is a contractual matter and arrangements should be put in place between a builder and client.

2.11 Verifiers, appointed by Scottish Ministers are responsible for the independent checking of applications for building warrants to construct or demolish buildings, to provide services, fittings or equipment in buildings, or for conversions.

Organisation Chart

2.12 The Building Standards service structure within Inverclyde is delivered with no geographical areas determining workload allocations. The service structure historically has been split into two areas (East / West). Due to the small size of verifier and the unpredictability of application location, allocations are assessed amongst the team based on demand.

2.13 The staffing position as of 31st March 2024 is as follows.



	Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3	Tier 4
Head of Building Standards Verification Service			X	

Job Title	Post count	FTE	Vacant Posts
Planning and Building Standards Manger	1	1.0	0
Building Standards Team Leader	1	1.0	0
Senior Building Standards Officer	1	1.0	0
Building Standards Officer	3	3.0	0
System Supervisor	1	0.8	0
Senior Clerical Assistant	1	0.5	0

Staff Age Profile	Number
61 and over	2
56 – 60	0
50 – 55	1
40 – 49	1
30 – 39	2
25 – 29	1
16 – 24	1
Total	8

3. Strategic Objectives

Service Vision

3.1 The Inverclyde Council Plan 2023/28 was adopted in February 2024 with three key themes – People, Place and Performance. Some of the key outcomes from these themes include:

- Communities are thriving, growing and sustainable
- Gaps in outcomes linked to poverty are reduced
- Our strategic housing function is robust
- We have sufficient supply of business premises
- Our natural environment is protected
- High quality and innovative services are provided, giving value for money
- Our employees are supported and developed

3.2 The purpose of building regulations is to secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings and of others who may be affected by buildings or matters connected with buildings. Further, they should also conserve the use of fuel and power and further the achievement of sustainable development.

3.3 As a local authority verifier, the service vision for Inverclyde Council's Building Standards Team is to:

- Work with customers and developers to deliver the Building Standards service in a supportive way.
- Create an inclusive workplace environment by challenging stereotypes and inequalities.
- Support and empower our employees to produce better results through collaboration.
- Deliver a focused service with a positive and ambitious approach to achieving targets within the Performance and Operating Frameworks.
- Be respectful and responsible, delivering the verifier role with honest and integrity.

Departmental Issues to be Addressed

3.4 Inverclyde Council's Building Standards team has identified the following departmental issues which will be addressed and monitored through the year.

- Fee Income (KPO5) must be monitored to ensure that the increase in building warrant fees effective 1st April 2024 reduces the financial burden on the local authority. An increase in fee income will move the service toward a self-financing model and address financial governance issues.
- Performance in all KPOs must be maintained and improved to ensure that all KPO targets reach "Green" status as part of the Scottish Government's RAG scoring matrix.
- Succession planning must be addressed to ensure that any retirements or resignations are fluently managed and new appointments made to backfill existing positions for those with senior roles and responsibilities within the team.
- Existing staff with potential to backfill positions as part of succession planning must be given relevant experience for management roles, complex technical matters and exposure to wider Council duties. This shall also include the technical and professional development of existing staff to achieve Chartered Surveyor, Chartered Construction Manager or Chartered Building Engineer status with RICS/CIOB/CABE.

Key Strategic Objectives for 2024/25

3.5 Inverclyde Council's Building Standards objective for the forthcoming year are orientated around the Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs) with particular focus on KPO's 1 and 2 in relation to building warrant applications.

3.6 The use of the Enterprise software through Uniform is key to delivery of an efficient service with effective monitoring and management tools. It is the aim of the service to fully implement the use of this software by the end of the 2024/25 year.

3.7 The service will demonstrate greater financial governance by the end of the year, with an improvement in the service expenditure and the fee income received.

3.8 It is our final objective to improve the customer service and overall customer experience. This shall be achieved through increased engagement with all customers, most notably our repeat customers to the service who are based in the Inverclyde area.

4. Key Performance Outcomes and Targets

Summary of Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs)

4.1 The national verification and performance framework is based on three core perspectives:

- Professional Expertise and Technical Processes
- Quality Customer Experience; and
- Operational and Financial Efficiency

There are also three cross-cutting themes, comprising:

- Public Interest
- Continuous Improvement
- Partnership Working

Summary of Key Performance Outcomes (KPOs)

Professional Expertise and Technical Processes	
KPO 1	Minimise time taken to issue a first report or issue a building warrant or amendment to building warrant
KPO 2	Increase quality of compliance assessment during the construction processes
Quality Customer Experience	
KPO 3	Commit to the building standards customer charter
KPO 4	Understand and respond to the customer experience
Operational and Financial Efficiency	
KPO 5	Maintain financial governance
KPO 6	Commit to digital services
KPO 7	Commit to objectives outlined in the annual verification performance report

KPO 1 Targets	
1.1	95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including building warrants and amendments issued without a first report).
1.2	90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).
KPO 2 Targets	
	Targets to be developed as part of future review of KPO2
KPO 3 Targets	
3.1	National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least annually).
3.2	95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD ‘Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers’ case responded to by verifier within five days.
KPO 4 Targets	
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.
KPO 5 Targets	
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).
KPO 6 Targets	
6.1	Details of eBuilding Standards to be published prominently on the verifier’s website.
6.2	75% of each key building warrant related process being done electronically: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan checking • Building warrant or amendments (and plans) being issued • Verification during construction • Completion certificates being accepted
KPO 7 Targets	
7.1	Annual verification performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least annually).
7.2	Annual verification performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. 1 April 2023 – 31 March 2024)

5. Performance Data

5.1 Performance data from Q1 2023/24

Q1 TARGETS	1.1	1.2	3.1	3.2	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1	7.2
Inverclyde	89.89%	85.54%	Published prominently (no review)	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	8.9	167.81%	Published prominently	4 of 4 done	Published prominently (no review)	Includes partial performance data

5.2 Performance data from Q2 2023/24

Q2 TARGETS	1.1	1.2	3.1	3.2	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1	7.2
Inverclyde	95.65%	88.89%	Published prominently (no review)	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	8.9	67.32%	Published prominently	4 of 4 done	Published prominently (no review)	Includes partial performance data

5.3 Performance data from Q3 2023/24

Q3 TARGETS	1.1	1.2	3.1	3.2	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1	7.2
Inverclyde	94.81%	90.36%	Published prominently (no review)	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	8.9	62.26%	Published prominently	4 of 4 done	Published prominently (no review)	Includes partial performance data

5.4 Performance data from Q4 2023/24

Q4 TARGETS	1.1	1.2	3.1	3.2	4.1	5.1	6.1	6.2	7.1	7.2
Inverclyde	100.00%	93.06%	Published prominently (with review)	No cases referred to BSD 'Reporting Service'	8.9	48.54%	Published prominently	4 of 4 done	Published prominently	Includes all performance data

Professional Expertise and Technical Processes		
KPO1 Targets		RAG
1.1	95% of first reports (for building warrants and amendments) issued within 20 days – all first reports (including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).	
	Actual Performance against this target for 2023/34 is 95.09%	
1.2	90% of building warrants and amendments issued within 10 days from receipt of all satisfactory information – all building warrants and amendments (not including BWs and amendments issued without a first report).	
	Actual Performance against this target for 2023/34 is 89.46%	
Commentary: Performance for KPO1 was achieved in relation to the 20-day target and missed by 0.54% for 10-day target for granting of warrant.		
KPO2 Targets		RAG
2.1	Targets to be developed as part of future review of KPO2.	
Commentary: Verifier completion of CCNP – 100%.		

Quality Customer Experience		
KPO3 Targets		RAG
3.1	National customer charter is published prominently on the website and incorporates version control detailing reviews (reviewed at least quarterly).	
	The national customer charter is published prominently on our website and has recently been reviewed and revised.	
3.2	95% of BSD requests for information on a BSD ‘Verifier Performance Reporting Service for Customers’ case responded to by verifier within 5 days.	
	0 cases have been referred to the BSD	
Commentary: New local and national customer charters are now published on the website.		
KPO4 Targets		RAG
4.1	Minimum overall average satisfaction rating of 7.5 out of 10.	
	Inverclyde’s overall satisfaction rating for 2023/24 is 8.9	
Commentary: Customer forums and engagement sessions are coordinated on a quarterly basis.		

Operational and Financial Efficiency		
KPO5 Targets		RAG
5.1	Building standards verification fee income to cover indicative verification service costs (staff costs plus 30%).	
	Building standards total income for 2023/24 was £262,355.09, total staff costs plus 30% were £448,349.73.	
Commentary: A slight decrease in total applications has seen fee income stagnate. Fee income against staff costs + 30% provides an overall percentage score of 59%.		
KPO6 Targets		RAG
6.1	Details of eBuilding Standards to be published prominently on the verifier's website.	
	eBuilding Standards website/links to website are published prominently on the website.	
6.2	75% of each key building warrant related process being done electronically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan checking • Building warrant or amendments (and plans) being issued • Verification during construction • Completion certificates being accepted 	
	All processes within the Building Standards service are being completed electronically.	
Commentary: None.		
KPO7 Targets		RAG
7.1	Annual performance report published prominently on website with version control (reviewed at least quarterly).	
	Annual Verification Performance Report now published prominently with version control included.	
7.2	Annual performance report to include performance data in line with KPOs and associated targets (annually covering previous year e.g. April 2016 – March 2017).	
	This report includes all data relative to performance for the year of 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2024.	
Commentary: None		

6. Service Improvement and Partnership Working

6.1 In the previous 12 months 2023/24 we did –

Number	Continuous improvement action	Status
1	Improve all quarterly KPO targets for decisions on building warrant and completion certificates	Ongoing
2	Undertake a digital modernisation exercise to scan all paper applications from 2005 to present day	Complete
3	Provide all Building Standards Officers with smart mobile phones to increase flexible working, provide resilience on ICT and to provide staff support around lone working.	Complete
4	Introduce structured team meetings with agendas and key actions to continuously improve the service.	Complete
5	Invest in new technology (e.g. Drone) to assist in enforcement in relation to dangerous buildings.	Complete
6	Engage in one-to-one meetings with repeating customers and local agents in the Inverclyde area.	Complete
7	Review all non-statutory fees by benchmarking current fees against all Glasgow City Region local authorities.	Complete
8	Update all section of the Building Standards section of the Inverclyde Council website.	Complete
9	Introduce a new local and national customer charter and publish on the Council's website.	Complete
10	Seek funding support for staff pursuing professional memberships and support those staff through the relevant professional review/assessment of the professional institution.	Complete
11	Review workload management and allocation processes by exploring the wider implementation and adoption of Enterprise via Uniform.	Ongoing
12	Update all written, documented procedures to improve quality processes and consistency across the service.	Complete
13	Improve cross service working and understanding of service pressures/risks across the Planning and Building Standards directorate by introducing service wider staff briefings on a monthly basis.	Complete
14	Introduce all Building Standards Officers to the out of hours rota for dangerous buildings to increase the resilience and availability of suitably qualified staff to undertake enforcement duties.	Complete
15	Undertake enforcement training on dangerous buildings for the benefit of all staff to share examples of high profile and complex dangerous buildings.	Complete
16	Introduce "pairing" system for staff to help in response to unforeseen absences to ensure that KPO performance is maintained, and that support is provided in all circumstances when colleague is on leave.	Complete
17	Improve customer communication by allowing all customers to directly contact Building Standards staff on mobile phones, replacing existing landline telephone numbers which do not align with hybrid working.	Complete

18	Improve internal cross service working with Technical Services, Planning, Legal and Licensing as notable partners with a Building Standards interest.	Complete
19	Complete and submit the Competency Assessment System data to Scottish Government's Building Standards Division.	Complete
20	Engage and respond to all requests for engagement from Scottish Government, Clyde Valley Regional Consortia and other steering groups as required.	Complete

6.2 In the next 12 months through 2024/25 we will do –

Number	Continuous improvement action	Timescale
1	Maintain and improve all quarterly KPO targets for decisions on building warrant and completion certificates	Ongoing
2	Fully implement the use of Enterprise for workload management and allocation for building warrant applications, revised plans and completion certificates.	October 24
3	Commit Building Standards representation to the local access forum for Inverclyde.	Quarterly
4	Increase engagement with customers on national customer survey to provide a higher number of returns under KPO4	Quarterly
5	Address imbalance of fee income against staff costs as required by KPO5 of Performance and Operating Framework	Monthly
6	Increase staff learning and development opportunities by utilising training opportunities both internal and external to the organisation.	Ongoing
7	Support and mentor Building Standards staff currently pursuing professional memberships with the RICS and CABE.	Ongoing
8	Maintain and increase customer engagement for local, repeat customers by hosting customer forums and one to one meetings to receive feedback.	Quarterly
9	Introduce a new entry level Building Standards position (i.e. Modern Apprentice, Graduate Apprentice, Graduate Surveyor) to address succession planning within the service.	Ongoing
10	Continue to share knowledge and expertise with partner authorities in Glasgow City Region, Building Standards Hub and LABSS including attendance at all meetings.	Ongoing

7. Building Standards – Additional Data

7.1 Verifiers provide returns to Scottish Government on their verification performance and workload. The performance data relates to the building standards verification performance framework and the workload data relates to the numbers of building warrant applications; completion certificates; fees; costs; certificates (certification, energy performance, sustainability); enforcement cases.

Building Warrants and Amendments to Building Warrant:

Applications: **389**

Decisions: **514**

Completion Certificates:

Submissions: **411**

Decisions: **354**

Certification:

Certificates of Design Submitted: **180**

Certificates of Construction Submitted: **15**

EPC'S

Copy certificates received (Domestic): **34**

Copy certificates received (Non-Domestic): **3**

Sustainability

Copy certificates received (Domestic): **23**

Copy certificates received (Non-Domestic): **1**

Enforcement

Notices served under sections 25 to 30:

Section 27 Notices Issued – **2**

Section 29 Notices Issued – **30**

Section 30 Notices Issued – **2**

Cases referred to Procurator Fiscal: **0**

Cases where LA has undertaken work: **0**