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A Householder's Planning Guide

for the installation of
Antennas, including
Satellite Dishes

This booklet gives a simplified guide to those aspects of the planning system relevant to the installation of antennas which householders are most likely to encounter. However, it is not the law, nor does it claim to be an authoritative interpretation of the law.

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Introduction

This booklet is an outline of the planning regulations for antennas in Wales, and includes a statement of good practice on where to place antennas. In this document, 'antennas' includes satellite dishes.

This document replaces the previous Householder's Guide, produced in 1998, and takes account of changes which came into force early in 2006 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995.

This guide aims to do the following:

- Explain what the regulations say about the number and the size of antennas allowed and where they should be placed.
- Offer guidance on the most appropriate places to site antennas to try to help protect our environment.
- Help retailers and installers provide appropriate advice and service to you on where to place antennas.

Important Notes:

Before you buy or rent an antenna, check whether you need planning permission, listed building consent, or permission from the landlord or owner.

You are responsible for placing antennas in the appropriate position. If you have any doubt about the position you have in mind, contact either the planning department of your local planning authority (the County Council for the area, or if you live within a National Park, the National Park Authority for the area) or get independent professional advice.

Buying and Installing Antennas

- Check if you need planning permission or listed building consent.
- Check if you need the landlord's or owner's permission.
- Use reputable and authorised suppliers and installers.
- Try to choose an antenna that is:
 - no larger than that needed for good reception; and
 - within the specified size/volume¹ limits for your area and property.
- Try to place the antenna where it will be:
 - inconspicuous and, if possible, where it will not be seen by neighbours or the general public;
 - unseen from the front of the house (preferably); and
 - blending in with the chosen background.

Respect the environment. The cheapest option may not always be the most appropriate one for you or the environment.

Don't forget that you are responsible for installing the antennas. If you do not place the antennas in the most appropriate position, the local planning authority may demand that you position it elsewhere (at your own expense).

Satellite and antenna technology continues to change: you should be aware of the wide range of systems available so that you can make an informed choice.

¹ The volume of the antenna should have a cubic capacity of no more than 35 litres.

Planning Regulations

Under the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995* (as amended), you have a general permission to install antennas up to a specific size on property without the need for planning permission. This general permission depends on your house type and area. Your local planning authority can give you more advice. This guide looks at permission for:

1. Houses and buildings up to 15 metres high;
2. Houses and buildings up to 15 metres high in designated areas;
3. Buildings 15 metres high or more; and
4. Buildings 15 metres high or more in designated areas.

Designated Areas

Designated areas are

- conservation areas;
- National Parks; and
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

These are defined within Schedule 1, Part 2, of the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995*, under Article 1(5) and are sometimes referred to as Article 1(5) land.

Listed Buildings

Some buildings are 'listed' because of their special historic or architectural interest. Your local planning authority can tell you whether the building is 'listed'. If you live in a 'listed building' and wish to install an antenna on that building, you generally need to apply for 'listed building consent' from the local planning authority. This consent is different from planning permission. You need listed building consent for any antenna that affects the character or appearance of a listed building or its setting.

1. Houses and buildings up to 15 metres high

Unless your home is in a designated area, you do not need to apply for planning permission to install an antenna on your property, as long as:

- there will be no more than two antennas on the property overall (these may be on the front or back of the building, on the roof, attached to the chimney, or in the garden);
- if you are installing a single antenna, it is not more than 100 centimetres in any linear dimension² (not including any projecting feed element³, reinforcing rim, mounting and brackets);
- if you are installing two antennas, one is not more than 100 centimetres in any linear dimension, and the other is not more than 60 centimetres in any linear dimension (not including any projecting feed element, reinforcing rim, mounting and brackets);
- the cubic capacity⁴ of each individual antenna is not more than 35 litres;
- an antenna fitted onto a chimney is not more than 60 centimetres in any linear dimension and does not stick out above the chimney; and

² Linear dimension: This means taking the measurement in a straight line, starting from the edge of the antenna to the opposite edge of the antenna. The measurement should only include the antenna itself and not any attachment needed to fix it to the wall or roof, or connect it up to your equipment.

³ Projecting feed element: In a dish antenna, the incoming signals are received by the dish which then 'reflects' the signal into a central 'feed horn'. This is usually positioned at a short distance (a few inches) away from the dish and held in place by a projecting arm or arms.

⁴ Cubic capacity: This means the volume (the amount of in 3 dimensions) occupied by an object using known method of measurement.

- an antenna mounted on the roof only sticks out above the roof when there is a chimney. In this case, the antenna should not stick out more than 60 centimetres above the highest part of the roof, or above the highest part of the chimney, whichever is lower.

Additional rules for “World Heritage Sites” in Wales – these are Blaenavon Industrial Landscape, Castles and Town Walls of Edward 1 in North Wales and Pontcysyllte Aqueduct and Canal. Since 30 September 2013 additional siting restrictions apply within these areas for installing antenna:

- on houses you will need to install on chimneys, walls or roof slopes which do not face onto and which are not visible from a highway
- on buildings which are less than 15 metres in height such as sheds and garages.

2. Houses and buildings up to 15 metres high in designated areas

If your home is in a designated area, you do not need to apply for planning permission to install an antenna on your property, as long as:

- there will be no more than two antennas on the property overall;
- the building, if it's a house, is 15 metres or less in height;
- if you are installing a single antenna, it is not more than 100 centimetres in any linear dimension (not including any projecting feed element, reinforcing rim, mounting and brackets);
- if you are installing two antennas, one is not more than 100 centimetres in any linear dimension, and the other is not more than 60 centimetres in any linear dimension (not including

any projecting feed element, reinforcing rim, mounting and brackets);

- the cubic capacity of each individual antenna is not more than 35 litres;
- an antenna fitted onto a chimney is not more than 60 centimetres in any linear dimension and does not stick out above the chimney;
- an antenna mounted on the roof only sticks out above the roof when there is a chimney. In this case, the antenna should not stick out more than 60 centimetres above the highest part of the roof, or above the highest part of the chimney, whichever is lower; and
- an antenna is not installed on a chimney, wall, or a roof slope which faces onto, and is visible from, a road (if you are not sure, seek advice from the local planning authority).

3. Buildings 15 metres high or more

Unless your building is in a designated area, you do not need to apply for planning permission to install an antenna on your property, as long as:

- there will be no more than four antennas on the building overall;
- the size of any antenna is not more than 130 centimetres in any linear dimension (not including any projecting feed element, reinforcing rim, mounting and brackets);
- the cubic capacity of each individual antenna is not more than 35 litres;
- an antenna fitted onto a chimney is not more than 60 centimetres in any linear dimension; and
- an antenna mounted on the building does not stick out above the highest part of the building by more than 3 metres.

4. Buildings 15 metres high or more in designated areas

If your building is in a designated area, you do not need to apply for planning permission to install an antenna on your property, as long as:

- there will be no more than four antennas on the building overall;
- the size of any antenna is not more than 130 centimetres in any linear dimension (not including any projecting feed element, reinforcing rim, mounting and brackets);
- the cubic capacity of each individual antenna is not more than 35 litres;
- an antenna fitted onto a chimney is not more than 60 centimetres in any linear dimension;
- an antenna mounted on the building does not stick out above the highest part of the building by more than 3 metres; and
- an antenna is not installed on a chimney, wall, or a roof slope which faces onto, and is visible from, a road (if you are not sure, seek advice from the local planning authority).

If you live in a flat, these limits refer to the building as a whole and not to each separate flat.

If the number of dishes or antennas installed on the building has already reached the maximum allowed, you will need planning permission for further installations.

In this case, you may want to discuss with other residents the possibility of a shared system.

You are responsible for applying for planning permission. If you need planning permission you must get it before you install an antenna.

Your supplier or installer may be able to give you advice on whether you need to apply for planning permission for installing an antenna in a particular place. If you are not sure, you should contact the local planning authority, who can provide application forms for planning permission.

Guidance on Installations

Advice on Good Siting

When installing a dish or other antenna you must position it in such a way so that its effect on the outside appearance of the building is reduced as far as possible. You must also remove it when you no longer need it.

What you need to consider:

If an antenna is not positioned in the most appropriate place, this can make it more noticeable, or (depending on its colour and appearance) make it stand out from its background.

Remember, you are responsible for:

- choosing the type of antenna; and
- positioning the antenna on the building or in the garden.

When deciding on an antenna and where to position it, you should take into account its effect on neighbours, the public, and the environment. The retailer or installer may be able to give you advice on these matters. If there is any doubt, you should contact your local planning authority.

Things to think about

For dish antennas, you should be aware of the importance of colour. For example, a white dish may blend against a white background but may be more obvious against darker backgrounds, such as brick, or stone.

The materials or the design can also affect how suitable a particular antenna is. For example, a mesh or transparent dish may be less obvious than a solid one.

Where you position the antenna on the property is perhaps the most important thing to bear in mind when considering installing one. Although it is important to make sure your antenna provides adequate reception, it is also important to consider the visual effect of your antenna.

- an antenna mounted on the roof will be less noticeable than one mounted on a wall
- antenna on a wall at the back of the building will usually be less noticeable than on the front of the building
- antennas mounted close to the ground in the back garden will be less noticeable to neighbours than ones mounted on poles
- antennas hidden behind a parapet or a chimney may be less noticeable than one mounted on the wall.

The Consequences of Poor Positioning

If your local planning authority thinks your antenna is in a poor position and could reasonably be moved to make it less noticeable, they may ask you to move it (at your own expense). You would not have to apply for planning permission.

If you refuse this request, your planning department may:

- demand that you apply for planning permission (for which you must pay a fee) based on the fact that the antenna's effect on the outside appearance of the building has not been reduced as far as possible; or
- send you an enforcement notice or a breach of condition notice demanding that you move the antenna.

You are entitled to appeal if the planning department refuses your application for planning permission or sends you an enforcement notice. Reasons for an appeal could include that you think the chosen position of the antenna is appropriate, or that the measures

you would need to take to move it are excessive, perhaps causing you unreasonable costs. But there is no right of appeal against a breach of condition notice.

It is an offence not to follow an enforcement notice or a breach of condition notice. You could have to pay a fine unless you have successfully appealed against an enforcement notice.

If your planning department asks you to move the antennas, they should use these guidelines to show, on a diagram, what reasonable measures you can take. The local planning authority cannot use this power to deny you the right to install an antenna.

You should remove any antenna which you no longer need.

Choosing Suppliers and Installers

Suppliers and installers should be familiar with the planning and environmental aspects of installation.

We advise you to use cable and aerials which qualify for the 'digital tick' logo (**www.digitallogo.co.uk**) and to buy your antenna and reception equipment from reputable companies or from the broadcaster.

We also advise you to use registered digital installers (RDIs) for any installation work. All RDIs are professionally qualified, have had criminal-record checks, have public liability insurance and are entitled to use the 'digital tick' logo.

You should get quotes for installing an antenna in different positions (such as at the back of your home) before installing it.

Guidance on siting your antenna



This illustration is for general guidance only. It shows the possible positions of antennas.

This illustration does **not** apply to properties in designated areas.

| Location | | Guidance |
|------------------------------------|----|--|
| Front elevation – garden | ✘ | Not suitable – security concerns. |
| Front of the house – Ground floor | ✘ | Not suitable – highly visible from the street. |
| Front of the house – 1st floor | ✓ | Suitable – less visible from the street. |
| Side of the house – front | ✘ | Not suitable – visible from the street. |
| Side of the house – back | ✓✓ | Recommended – not visible from the street |
| Roof-mounted – behind parapet | ✓✓ | Recommended – not visible from the street. |
| Roof-mounted – over ridge tiles | ✓ | Suitable – less visible from street. Must only be installed if the premises has a chimney. |
| Eaves-mounted pole | ✓✓ | Recommended – not visible from the street. |
| Chimney-mounted pole | ✘ | Not suitable – higher than the chimney. |
| Chimney-mounted | ✓ | Suitable – not higher than the chimney. |
| Flat roof – front | ✘ | Not suitable – visible from the street. |
| Flat roof – back | ✓✓ | Recommended – not visible from the street. |
| Side of the garage | ✓✓ | Recommended – not visible from the street. |
| Rear extension – side of the house | ✓✓ | Recommended – not visible from the street. |

| Location | | Guidance |
|-----------------------------|----|---|
| Rear extension – roof | ✓✓ | Recommended – not visible from the street. |
| Back garden – behind trees | ✗ | Not suitable – tree may block signal. |
| Back garden – floor mounted | ✓✓ | Recommended – not visible from the street, but check that a signal can be obtained. |
| Back garden – pole mounted | ✗ | Not suitable – visible to neighbours. |

Alternatives to Individual Antennas

If you live in:

- a tower block;
- a small block of flats;
- a terrace of houses; or
- a semi-detached house;

it may be possible to use shared antenna systems without the need for each household to install an individual antenna. There are several main alternatives to an individual antenna.

Shared-antenna Systems

Shared antenna systems are worth considering if:

- planning permission is unlikely to be granted for several antennas on a single building;
- a shared system would be more environmentally friendly than for each home to have its own antenna;
- landlords or owners have banned individual antennas.

If you live in a tower block or a large group of flats or houses, you should first check what arrangements, if any, have already been made for a shared system.

You should always get professional advice to make sure the system you have chosen offers the best choice of programmes at a reasonable price and with the ability to accommodate future services.

If you live in a semi-detached or terraced house, it may be possible to develop a shared system, although this may be more expensive than installing individual antennas. You may also need legal advice on the conditions for sharing. In any event, you should make sure that any shared system provides access to all the programmes everyone wants.

The same planning regulations apply to shared antennas as apply to individual antennas.

The landlord or the building owner is responsible for deciding whether or not to allow the installation of a shared system.

Cable Networks

Cable networks can be another way of bringing satellite TV or broadband to your home.

You may want to ask your local planning authority whether your area is served by cable television. This is particularly important if:

- your home or building does not have a line-of-sight⁵ with the relevant transmitter;
- planning permission for an antenna is not granted;
- a shared system is not practical; or
- you do not want to have an antenna on the outside of your property.

The switchover to digital TV

In Wales, starting in 2009, the traditional, analogue TV signal will be replaced with a digital TV signal. This process is called 'switchover'.

To continue to receive TV after switchover you will need to have adapted or upgraded your TV equipment to receive the digital signal. You can receive digital TV through an aerial (often called Freeview), or by satellite, cable or broadband. Satellite TV in the UK already uses a digital signal, so if you have satellite TV you will not need to adapt your TV equipment to continue to receive programmes.

⁵ Line-of-sight: Many antennas and all satellite antennas need to be able to receive signals from the transmitter without the signal being interrupted by trees or buildings etc. Antennas which do not have line-of-sight to the transmitter will not receive signals correctly and will not function properly.

For more information about the switchover, contact Digital UK. This is the independent, not-for profit organisation leading the switchover process.

Telephone: 0845 650 5050

Website: www.digitaluk.co.uk

If you are a landlord or a property manager and are considering installing or upgrading a shared TV system for your residents, you can get more information from

www.digitaluk.co.uk/propertymanagers

Useful Addresses

Office of Communications (OFCOM)

Riverside House

2a Soutwark Bridge Road

LONDON

SE1 9HA

Telephone: 020 7981 3000

Planning Aid Wales

First Floor

174 Whitchurch Road

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CF14 3NB

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e-mail: cccpaw@btconnect.com

