

**Scottish Building Standards Hub
Digital Transformation**

**Building Standards
Public Registers – Part 1**

**Report on the Findings from
Local Authority Building Standards Scotland
Digital Delivery Group Survey**

Produced by The Scottish Building Standards Hub Digital Transformation Unit

October 2024.

Document Version Control.

Title: Building Standards Public Registers – Part 1: Report on the Findings from Local Authority Building Standards Scotland Digital Delivery Group Survey

Purpose: This report details the findings from LABSS DDG survey on aspects relating to Part 1 of the Building Standards Public Access Register as provided by Local Authorities.

Version:	Date:	Notes:
1.0	06.09.2024	Initial draft.
1.1	11.10.2024	Minor corrections.

Contents:

- | | | |
|----|----------------------|---------|
| 1. | Introduction: | Page 4. |
| 2. | Analysis of Returns: | Page 5. |
| 3. | Conclusions: | Page 8. |

Introduction:

Background:

Regulation 57 of The Building (Procedure) (Scotland) Regulations 2004 covers maintenance of records and applies to the building standards register, confirming that it shall contain two parts with:

- Part 1 being in an electronic format, consisting of a list of applications including details of any certificates of design or construction and copies of notices served under sections 25 to 30 of The Building (Scotland) Act 2003 when issued, altered, or withdrawn; and
- Part 2 consisting of copy building warrants, copy completion certificates, copies of any certificates of design or construction, principal drawings and specifications, and all other documents submitted to the local authority for registration in the building standards register.

The regulation also states that part 1 of the building standards register shall be maintained by the local authority for all time and that documents contained in part 2 shall be retained by the local authority for a period of 25 years or longer where the local authority deems it appropriate to do so, taking account of any guidance issued by the Scottish Ministers.

Following the tragic events at Grenfell Tower in London and the subsequent requests from the Scottish Government for information from local authorities on high rise tower blocks and cladding systems, it became clear that there were no data bases in existence that readily contained the information that was being sought. The result was that local authorities had a laborious task to individually search historical records to obtain the relevant information. As a result there became a focus on what type of information should be kept and be readily available in relation to buildings, particularly those classed as being high risk.

As such discussion started to focus on whether the information contained within part 1 of the building standards registers should be reviewed. The potential for a 'compliance plan approach' to the assessment and verification of high-risk buildings has further highlighted the need for a review of the registers.

The Scottish Building Standards Procedural Handbook (Third Edition) provides additional guidance on what should be contained within both parts 1 and 2 of the registers. It is however perceived that local authorities are displaying information to different extents within the part 1 register and storing different material within part 2.

Acknowledging that there may be differences in how data is held and what data is displayed within each local authorities registers LABSS DDG thought that it would be good start to identify where some of these inconsistencies may lie. Given that there will likely be future changes to the registers it was felt that variances should be identified now to better inform how future change is instructed to ensure consistency of application.

Purpose:

The 'Building Standards Public Registers – Part 1' short survey was developed through Local Authority Building Standards Scotland (LABSS) Digital Delivery Group (DDG) and supported by the Scottish Building Standards Hub (SBSH) Digital Transformation Unit (DTU).

As a starting point, it specifically sought high level information on how Scottish Local Authorities display Building Standards Part 1 Public Access Register information, whether they display building standards enforcement notices/information, and seek opinion of what fields should be added or removed from the register.

Within this report is an analysis of the returns from the survey.

This report purely seeks to inform the findings from the survey for consideration when the Scottish Governments Building Standards Division (BSD) considers potential changes to what is contained within public registers. The report does not provide any recommendations or offer courses of action arising from the analysis. The findings will also support any potential future LABSS DDG work in this area.

Analysis of Returns:

Of the 32 Building Standards Managers requested to complete the survey, 18 responses were received. This represents a 56.25% return rate.

The following paragraphs list the survey questions and provide an analysis of the responses or list the comments received, as applicable.

Please note, the question numbers indicated relate to the survey and do not include the first question that requested a local authority name.

Question 2 – Is your local authority using the Idox Public Access online register for Part 1 information?

All 18 responders provided an answer to this question, with a summary of the responses being:

- **Yes:** 16 responses. **88.9%** of responders use the Idox Public Access online register for Part 1 information.
- **No:** 2 responses. **11.1%** of responders do not use Idox Public Access online register for Part 1 information.

Most local authorities responding use Idox Public Access online register for Part 1 information.

Question 3 – What is your local authority using for your Part 1 Register?

This was a follow up question for those local authorities who do not use the Idox Public Access online register. The two local authorities who use a different system use:

- An in house built register but will be moving to IDOX Public Access in due course.
- A register built upon [Esri](#) based technology.

Question 4 – Are details of Building Standards enforcement notices published on-line? (This refers to cases where a formal enforcement notice has been served)

All 18 responders provided an answer to this question, with a summary of the responses being:

- **Yes:** 16 responses. **88.9%** of responders publish details of enforcement notices on-line.
- **No:** 2 responses. **11.1%** of responders do not publish details of enforcement notices on-line.

Most local authorities responding publish details of enforcement notices on-line.

Question 5 – Are details of Building Standards enforcement cases published on-line? (This refers to all cases that have received an enforcement reference, even if a formal enforcement notice has not been served)

All 18 responders provided an answer to this question, with a summary of the responses being:

- **Yes:** 5 responses. **27.8%** of responders publish details of enforcement cases on-line.
- **No:** 13 responses. **72.2%** of responders do not publish details of enforcement cases on-line.

Around three quarters of local authorities responding do not publish details of enforcement cases on-line.

Question 6 – Are enforcement cases/notices also displayed using Idox Public Access?

All 18 responders provided an answer to this question, with a summary of the responses being:

- **Yes:** 10 responses. **55.6%** of responders display details of enforcement cases/notices using Idox Public Access.
- **No:** 6 responses. **33.3%** of responders do not use Idox Public Access to display details of enforcement cases/notices.
- **Not Applicable:** 2 responses. This question was not applicable to **11.1%** of responders.

Just over half of local authorities responding display enforcement cases/notices using Idox Public Access.

Question 7 – Are all fields from table 2 in the procedural guidance included in your register?

All 18 responders provided an answer to this question, with a summary of the responses being:

- **Yes:** 9 responses. **50%** of responders include all fields from table 2 in the procedural guidance within their register.
- **No:** 9 responses. **50%** of responders do not include all fields from table 2 in the procedural guidance within their register.

Half of local authorities responding include all fields from table 2 in the procedural guidance within their register. Half do not.

Question 8 – Are there any fields on the public register that you consider should be removed or added?

This question sought opinion as to what data fields should be omitted or included within the part 1 register. The responses, where suggestion was provided, are as follows:

'It would be handy if the relevant person for completion certificates relating to notices could be displayed in the Register for Notices – although this just may be an issue we have.'

'We required Idox to issue a fix to PA re: energy performance certificates (This is apparently a national issue affecting all PA site's).'

'Case officer name should be removed.'

'We do wonder how much aspects of the Register with public information on or about certificates (other than completion certificate dates) and certification are actually used and therefore useful to

anyone and we have to go to the burden of recording it all. Similar can be said for Building Reg provision and Relaxations.'

'Remove direction reference number, relaxation reference number.'

'No specific fields to be added, but the "null" value could be improved. E.g., on an open notice case it will state the "closed" date as "not available" whereas this would be better to either be blank or to state "not closed" for clarity.'

'Idox should review the PA fields to align with the information described in table 2.'

Conclusions:

The survey sought high level information in three specific areas in relation to Scottish Local Authorities Building Standards public access registers.

Firstly, details were sought as to how Part 1 Public Access Register information is displayed within the various local authority areas.

From the responses the majority of respondents confirmed that they use Idox Public Access. Of the two local authorities that do not utilise that system, one confirmed that they were intending to move to it, with the other using a system based on Esri technology.

Secondly, information was sought how local authorities use the register to display enforcement case information and to what extent.

Most of the responders publish details of enforcement notices on-line with two local authorities conforming that they don't. Five of the responders indicated that details of all enforcement case records are on their on-line register.

Of those responders indicating that they use Idox Public Access, ten of them confirmed that they publish details of enforcement using that system.

Half of responders display all fields from table 2 as contained within the procedural guidance in their register. Half do not.

Thirdly, opinion was sought as to what fields should be added or removed from the register and that opinion is noted under the analysis above in relation to question 8. Eleven of those local authorities responding either offered no suggestion or confirmed that they did not see any need for change.

In conclusion:

- From the responses received, although the most popular tool used by local authorities to display their on-line Part 1 Public Access Register information is Idox Public Access, it is not universally used.
- Most local authorities responding confirmed they display details of enforcement notices on-line.
- Just over half of responders use Idox Public Access to display on-line enforcement.
- Just over a quarter of those responding publish details of all registered enforcement cases on-line, even where no notice has been served.
- Half of the local authorities responding confirmed that all fields as indicated within the Procedural Handbook are contained within their Part 1 Public Access Register.