

# A Householder's Planning Guide

for the Installation of Antennas, including Satellite Dishes



# Introduction

This booklet is an outline of the planning regulations for antennas in England, and includes the Government's 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 made in 2005 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 size of antennas allowed and where they should be placed.
- Offer guidance on the most appropriate places to install antennas, 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 install 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 an appropriate position. If you have any doubt about the position you have in mind, contact the planning department of your local council, 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 it needs to be for good reception; and
  - within the specified size or volume limits for your area and property.
- An antenna's size is measured by its volume. Your antenna should have a volume of no more than 35 litres.
- Try to place the antenna where it will:
  - not be seen by neighbours or the general public;
  - not be seen from the front of the house; and
  - blend in with the 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 antenna.** If you do not place the antenna in the most appropriate position, the council may demand that you position it elsewhere (at your own expense).

**Satellite and antenna technology continues to change – you should find out about the wide range of systems available so that you can make the best choice.**

# Planning regulations

Under the *Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995* (as amended), you do not need planning permission to install an antenna up to a specific size on your property. The rules that apply depend on your house type and area. Your local planning authority can give you more advice. This guide looks at installing antennas on:

- Houses and buildings up to 15 metres high;
- Houses and buildings up to 15 metres high in designated areas;
- Buildings 15 or more metres high; and
- Buildings 15 or more metres high in designated areas.

## Designated areas

Designated areas are:

- conservation areas;
- National Parks;
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- the Norfolk or Suffolk Broads; and
- World Heritage Sites<sup>1</sup>.

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

## Listed Buildings

Some buildings are 'listed' because of their special historic or architectural interest. Your local planning department can tell you whether a building is 'listed'. If you live in a listed building and want to install an antenna on that building, you generally need to apply for 'listed building consent'. 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.

<sup>1</sup> Introduced on 1 October 2008 by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order 2008, SI 2008/2362.

## For 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 dimension<sup>2</sup> (not including any projecting feed element<sup>3</sup>, 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<sup>4</sup> of each individual is not more than 35 litres;
- an antenna fitted onto a chimney stack is not more than 60 centimetres and does not stick out above the chimney; and
- an antenna mounted on the roof only sticks out above the roof when there is a chimney stack. 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 stack, whichever is lower.

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 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.

## For 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;
- 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 antenna is not more than 35 litres;
- an antenna fitted onto a chimney stack 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 stack. 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 stack, whichever is lower; and
- an antenna is not installed on a chimney, wall, or a roof slope which faces onto, and can be seen from, a road or a Norfolk or Suffolk Broads waterway (if you are not sure, get advice from the local planning authority).

## **For buildings 15 or more metres high**

Unless your building is in a designated area, you do **not** need planning permission to install a dish or other 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 stack 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 300 centimetres.

## **For buildings 15 or more metres high in designated areas**

If your building is in a designated area, you do **not** need 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 stack 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 300 centimetres; and
- an antenna is not installed on a chimney, wall, or a roof slope which faces onto, and can be seen from, a road or a Norfolk or Suffolk Broads waterway (if you are not sure, get 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 to install another antenna.

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 to install an antenna in a particular place. If you are not sure, you should contact the planning department of your local council, who can provide application forms for planning permission.



# Guidance on installations

## Advice on positioning your antenna

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, it can be more noticeable or (depending on its colour and appearance) 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 account of its effect on neighbours, the public and the environment. The retailer or installer may be able to give you advice on this. If there is any doubt, you should contact your local planning department.

## Things to think about

The colour of dish antennas can be important. For example, a white dish may blend in with a white background but may be more obvious against a darker background, 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.

One of the most important things you should consider is where to position the antenna on the property. Although it is important to make sure your antenna provides reasonable reception, it is also important to consider how your antenna looks.

- An antenna mounted on the roof will be less noticeable than one mounted on a wall.
- Antennas 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 stack may be less noticeable than one mounted on the wall.

### **If you position your antenna badly**

If your local planning department thinks your antenna is in an unsuitable 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 to do this, your local planning department may:

- demand that you apply for planning permission (for which you must pay a fee) because 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, demanding that you move the antenna.

You can appeal if the planning department refuses your application for planning permission or sends you an enforcement notice. You may want to appeal if you think the antenna is in a suitable position or because it would cost you an unreasonable amount of money to move it.

**It is an offence not to follow an enforcement notice. You may have to pay a fine unless you have successfully appealed against the notice.**

If the planning department asks you to move an antenna they should use these guidelines to show, on a diagram, what reasonable measures you can take. The council cannot use these guidelines to stop you from installing an antenna.

**You should remove any antenna 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 cables and aerials which qualify for the 'digital tick' logo [www.digitallogo.co.uk](http://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 positioning your antenna



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

This illustration does not apply to properties in designated areas.

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Position	Guidance
Front of the house – garden	✗ Not suitable – security concerns
Front of the house – ground floor	✗ Not suitable – highly visible from the street
Front of the house – first 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 the parapet	✓✓ Recommended – not visible from the street
Roof-mounted – over ridge tiles	✓ Suitable – less visible from street. Must be installed only if the premises has a chimney stack
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
Rear extension – roof	✓✓ Recommended – not visible from the street
Back garden – behind trees	✗ Not suitable – trees may block the signal
Back garden – floor-mounted	✓✓ Recommended – not visible from the street, but check that you can get a signal
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 share an antenna system so each household does not need to install an individual antenna. There are several 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; or
- 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 adapt to 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. You should also make sure that any shared system can receive all the programmes people want.

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 a shared system to be installed.

## **Cable networks**

Cable networks can also provide satellite TV or broadband to your home.

You may want to ask your council whether your area can get cable television. This is particularly important if:

- your home or building can't get reception through an antenna;
- you can't get planning permission for an antenna;
- a shared system is not practical; or
- you do not want to have an antenna on the outside of your property.



# Useful addresses

Department for Communities and Local Government  
Planning System Improvement Division  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU  
**Phone 020 7944 4400**  
**E-mail:** [planning.policies@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policies@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Office of Electronic Communications (OFCOM)  
Riverside House  
2a Southwark Bridge Road  
London  
SE1 9HA  
**Phone 020 7981 3000**

Registered Digital Installer – Licensing Body (RDI-LB)  
Coney Green Business Centre  
Wingfield View  
Clay Cross  
Chesterfield S45 9JW  
**Phone 01246 252 857**  
**E-mail:** [info@rdi-lb.tv](mailto:info@rdi-lb.tv)

# The switchover to digital TV

Between 2008 and 2012, 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.

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

**Phone 0845 650 5050**

**Website:** [www.digitaluk.co.uk](http://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](http://www.digitaluk.co.uk/propertymanagers)

You can get further copies of this guide from  
Communities and Local Government Publications.  
Tel: 0870 1226 236

For more information  
visit [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

Published by the Department for Communities  
and Local Government

© Crown copyright 2005, revised edition 2008

Printed in the UK, January 2008, on material  
comprising 75% post-consumer waste and  
25% ECF pulp

Product code 05 PD 03533

Reprinted January 2008