

# Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

## Introduction

The Brecon Beacons National Park is an area rich in architectural heritage. There are over 1000 listed buildings in the National Park of which over half are in the historic settlement of Brecon. However, although 'listed building' is a familiar term, the implications are not always fully understood.

## What is a Listed Building?

Buildings of special architectural or historic interest throughout the country are listed by the Welsh Assembly Government, CADW and Welsh Historic Monuments so that their particular qualities can be protected by legal safeguards.

Strict criteria govern the selection of buildings, and those which are listed form an important part of the local environment. All buildings built before 1700 which survive in anything like their original condition are included. Most buildings dating between 1700 and 1840 will qualify. After that, selection is needed and only buildings of definite quality, either individually or as a group, are on the list.

There are three grades indicating the relative importance of listed buildings:-

- I** - of exceptional interest;
- II\*** - of particular importance and perhaps containing outstanding features;
- II** - of special interest which warrants every effort being made to preserve them.

You can see a copy of the statutory list for the National Park free of charge at the National Park Office. Each entry has an address and description so that the listed building can be clearly identified. Listing protects the whole of the building inside and out, therefore, even if something is not mentioned in the description it is still listed. In addition, protection also applies to attached and sometimes adjacent buildings if erected before 1st July 1948.

## When is Listed Building Consent required?

If you want to alter or extend a listed building, externally or internally, in any way which affects its character, or to demolish or remove any part of it, regardless of its age, you may require Listed Building Consent to undertake this work. Repairs carried out

in matching materials, design and form, do not usually require consent.

To undertake work to a Listed Building without the necessary Listed Building Consent is a criminal offence. If you have any doubt about whether a building is covered by the listing or whether consent is required for specific works, consult the National Park Authority before starting work. The National Park Authority has a Building Conservation Officer who specialises in this type of work.

## Submitting an application for Listed Building Consent

Local planning authorities must pay special regard to the issue of preserving a listed building, its setting and any features of special interest it may contain. Listing does not however seek to prevent all future change to the building; the prime objective is to protect the building from unsympathetic alterations.

To apply for listed building consent you should complete the necessary form which can be downloaded from our web site at [www.beacons-mpa.gov.uk](http://www.beacons-mpa.gov.uk) or you may apply on-line via the planning portal, [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk). The relevant information should be attached to your application as specified in our [validation checklist](#) guide.

## The responsibilities of owners of Listed Buildings

Listed buildings are an important part of our national heritage. If you own one, you have a duty to keep it in reasonable repair. In cases of deliberate neglect, the National Park Authority has the power (including the use of the courts) to ensure that repairs are carried out. If you are ever served with any formal notices or summonses in connection with a listed building which you own, you should take professional advice immediately.

## What is a Conservation Area?

Conservation areas were created by the Civic Amenities Act of 1967 and are 'areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'.

They are designated by local authorities and unlike listed buildings, there are no national standards or grades. There are well over 9,000 conservation areas in England and Wales and all local authorities have at least one. In the National Park, there are [conservation areas](#) within Brecon, Hay-on-Wye, Crickhowell/Llangattock, and Talgarth.

### **Trees in Conservation Areas**

Subject to some exceptions (including small trees and ones that are dead or dangerous), trees are protected in conservation areas and are treated in a similar manner to those covered by a Tree Preservation Order. You must notify the National Park Authority before carrying out any work on trees in a conservation area.

### **Applying for consent for development in a Conservation Area**

If your proposal involves demolition work you will need a special form called 'Conservation Area Consent'. Otherwise development in conservation areas is dealt with through the normal planning application process. The necessary forms for both are obtainable on our web site [www.beacons-npa.gov.uk](http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk) or via the planning portal website, [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk) If you are in doubt about whether demolition is involved, consult the National Park Office.

### **Submitting the application**

Designating a conservation area does not prevent all future change to buildings and their surroundings. It means that the National Park Authority when considering applications, including those which are outside conservation areas but would affect its setting, must pay special regard to whether the proposed changes 'preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the conservation area'.

### **Sources of information to help in preparing an application**

The current listed building and conservation area legislation is contained in the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the practical interpretation is set out in Welsh Assembly Government Circulars 61/98 and 1/98. The National Park Authority has a copy which you can look at and copies are available on-line.

Photographs may be helpful when submitting your application. For all but the simplest listed building consent applications, it is recommended that professional advice is sought from someone who is both qualified and experienced in conservation work. For most applications in conservation areas, time and money may well be saved if professional advice is obtained. In both cases this is essential when major alterations, new development or demolition is involved. The National Park's Building Conservation Officer will be pleased to help you.

### **How long does it take?**

Although both listed building and conservation area applications have to be publicly advertised, in most cases the process is completed by the National Park Authority within eight weeks, the same length of time that is allowed for a planning application. Major applications, particularly if they involve demolition, may take a little longer. However, with the exception of internal only works to Grade II listed buildings, CADW have an additional four weeks within which to comment on Listed Building Applications.

Should your application be refused by the National Park Authority you may appeal against the decision to the [Planning Inspectorate](#). For further information on appeals please refer to [planning advice note 13](#).

*For further information contact:*

[www.beacons-npa.gov.uk](http://www.beacons-npa.gov.uk)

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