



Office of the  
Deputy Prime Minister

Creating sustainable communities

# 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 the 2005 changes 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 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 that needed for good reception; and
  - within the specified size/volume<sup>1</sup> 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 antenna. If you do not place the antennas 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 be aware of the wide range of systems available so that you can make an informed choice.**

<sup>1</sup> 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 an 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 15m 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;
- Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and
- the Norfolk or Suffolk Broads.

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 department can tell you whether the 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.

## 1. Houses and buildings up to 15 metres high.

Unless your house (or the building in which you live) 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 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 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.

## Houses and buildings up to 15 metres high in designated areas

If your house (or the building in which you live) 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 be 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 stack is not more than 60 centimetres in any linear dimension;
- 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 is visible from, a road or a Broads waterway. (If you are not sure, get advice from the local planning authority.)

## Buildings 15m or more in height

Unless your building is in a designated area, you do **not** need to apply for 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 roof does not stick out above the roof more than 300 centimetres above the highest part of the roof.

## Buildings above 15m or more in height in Designated Areas

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 stack is not more than 60 centimetres in any linear dimension;



- an antenna mounted on the roof does not stick out above the roof more than 300 centimetres above the highest part of the roof; and
- an antenna is not installed on a chimney, wall, or a roof slope which faces onto, and is visible from, a road or a 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 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 necessary, you must get planning permission before you install an antenna.**

**Your supplier or installer may be able to give you advice 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 planning department of your local council, 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 department.

### **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.
- 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.

### **The Consequences of Poor Positioning**

If your planning department 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 demanding that you move the antenna.

You are entitled to appeal if 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.

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

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 council 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 strongly advise you to get your antenna equipment from a reputable supplier, such as members of the **Radio, Electrical and Television Retailers' Association (RETRA)**, other established companies or, where appropriate, from the broadcaster.

We also advise you to use installers who are members of the **Confederation of Aerial Industries Limited (CAI)** or other professionally qualified installers who follow an appropriate Code of Practice in line with this Planning Guide.

Reputable installers should have agreed standards for their work, in some cases guaranteed by their company; they should also be covered by public liability and employer's liability insurance.

You should get quotes for alternative siting options and costs (such as installing at the back) before installing the antenna.



LOCATION	GUIDANCE
Front elevation – garden	✗ Not suitable – security concerns.
Front of the house – 1st floor level	✗ Not suitable – highly visible from the street.
Front of the house – 2nd floor level	✓ 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-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 – 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 Reception 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 and to get any licence. Guidelines on licensing are available from the Department of Trade and Industry and OFCOM. Addresses are at the end of this document.

## Cable Networks

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

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

- your home or building does not have a line-of-sight<sup>5</sup> with the relevant transmitter;
- planning permission for an antenna is not granted;
- a shared system is not practical;
- you do not want to have an antenna on the outside of your property.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

# Useful Addresses

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister  
Planning Development Control Division  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU  
**☎ 020 7944 4400**  
**e-mail:** enquiryodpm@odpm.gsi.gov.uk

Department of Trade & Industry  
Communications and Information Industries Directorate  
151 Buckingham Palace Road  
London SW1W 9SS  
**☎ 020 7215 5000**  
**e-mail:** dti.enquiries@dti.gsi.gov.uk

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

Confederation of Aerial Industries Limited (CAI)  
Fulton House  
Fulton Road  
Wembley Park  
Middlesex HA9 OTF  
**☎ 020 8902 8998**  
**e-mail:** Office@cai.org.uk

Radio, Electrical and Television Retailers' Association Ltd (RETRA)  
Retra House  
St John's Terrace  
1 Ampthill Street  
Bedford MK42 9EY  
**☎ 01234 269 10**  
**e-mail: [retra@retra.co.uk](mailto:retra@retra.co.uk)**

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Published by the Office of the  
Deputy Prime Minister

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Printed in the UK, December 2005, on material  
comprising 75% post-consumer waste and  
25% ECF pulp

Product code 05 PD 03533