

A celebration of teamwork

Vale Of Glamorgan Building Control is celebrating after it recently picked up the Council's Customer Service 'Team of the Year' Award



Standing proud... the building control team at Vale of Glamorgan with their accolade

Although only a small department in comparison with others, building control at Vale of Glamorgan play a major part in the local authority, being responsible for the enforcement of the Building Regulations, dangerous structures and other public safety matters.

It is one of only a few departments who are in direct competition with outside private companies for all building regulation work.

Customer service is therefore paramount to building control, said its Operational Manager, Colin Blick.

He added: "I am absolutely delighted to have collected this award on behalf of the team because it formally recognises all the hard work and the tremendous team spirit we have in the building control section."

"We were recently unfortunate enough to lose three technical members of staff, as well as having another member of staff on maternity leave, but this has not dampened the enthusiasm of the remaining staff.

"We undertake the plan checking service and all site inspections as before and try as far as is practicable to ensure that our customers have the high quality service they are used to."

The department proactively markets its services to meet customer needs, and this includes the organisation of its own awards ceremony every year for the last five years.

Colin continued: "This encourages builders and

developers to meet the best standards of construction and also gives our customers the satisfaction that their builders and developers have met very high standards.

"The Vale of Glamorgan Building Award winners then go forward to the South Wales Building Awards and that gives them further recognition."

Apart from the awards, the department also hosts a number of seminars and updates for its customers on the Building Regulations in association with neighbouring authorities.

It recently updated the building control section of the council's website to provide information on the building control function, which includes application details, guidance notes and links to electronic plans submissions and the LABC website, which gives information and links to all councils throughout Wales and England.

Colin added: "Our customers need efficient processing of their applications. We provide free pre-submission advice, from design concept to application stage. This can provide our customers with cost savings with over specification.

"Our performance indicators also indicate that the service level we provide is very good with the first quarter figures (April to June 2008) indicating that the 95% of submissions were checked within 15 days.

"We also have a partnership scheme that allows our customers to liaise directly with the Vale of Glamorgan for plans approval, but carry out the work in another council area within Wales or England.

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"We currently have nine partnership companies signed up.

He added: "We would discuss the scheme with the customer and provide technical expertise. The customer would not have to travel to the area where the work is being undertaken because it has already been agreed locally with the Vale of Glamorgan building control team."