

# Birmingham campaign launched to outlaw rogue builders

Each year, UK homeowners waste £1.5 billion on bad building jobs, registering 111,000 complaints against rogue builders. This summer, Birmingham City Council's Building and Consultancy Services tackled the issue head on, with a campaign called 'Nail the Rogues'

The team at Birmingham have been working in close partnership with The Federation of Master Builders (FMB), Trading Standards and Trustmark as part of a wider national campaign to raise awareness of the dangers that rogue builders present.

Across the year, building surveyors from Birmingham's Building and Consultancy Services come across numerous cases of rogue building work in the city. The jobs range from unsuitable foundations on extensions, illegal, frequently unsafe, loft conversions to badly fitted boilers or shoddy electrical work. These could have potentially fatal consequences.

With more work in progress across the city at this busy time of year, the team can be out doing an average of 40 to 50 site visits a week, checking reported contraventions of the regulations and requiring rectification works to ensure health and safety requirements are met.

Councillor Douglas Osborn, Chairman of the Planning Committee at Birmingham City Council, is in full support of the campaign. He said: "Over the summer, many homeowners look to extend and/or repair their homes. Choosing the right builder is essential, making sure that the job is carried out safely, and then meeting the quality standards set out in national Building Regulations.

"Our excellent Building and Consultancy Service at the council is a source of advice, support, and regulation – making sure that homeowners are protected from rogue

builders. We are delighted to join forces with Trading Standards and the FMB on such an important campaign."

This campaign is part of an ongoing process to make homeowners aware that although in the minority, rogue builders not only endanger people's safety but can also affect the value of their homes. Often many homeowners don't realise that if they employ rogue builders to carry out work that falls short of regulation standards, they can be responsible for costly remedial works when the so called 'builder' disappears.

Unfortunately, many of Birmingham's residents realise this too late. When they come to sell their house these problems will show up in solicitors' searches.

The information provided as part of 'Nail the rogues' campaign offers easy to follow, practical advice, for all homeowners considering building, with important points such as: getting at least three quotes for building work, using a written contract, not dealing in cash, and avoiding paying large sums upfront before the work has started.

Brian Berry, Director of External Affairs at the FMB said: "The FMB is taking a stance to distance itself from rogue traders as they swindle both the public and the industry out of millions of pounds every year.

Anyone who turns up at the door and tries to frighten you into having work done is a crook. Only ever employ a tradesperson who has been recommended to you, or is a proven member of a reputable trade association such as the

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FMB or is TrustMark accredited, and who can provide you with references, which you should check out."

The campaign launched in August with a citywide poster campaign, information leaflets and updates on [www.birmingham.gov.uk/nailtherogues](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/nailtherogues).

If you have any questions or concerns about rogue builders, contact Birmingham City Council's Building and Consultancy Services on 0121 675 7006.

## NAIL THE ROGUES

Each year, UK homeowners waste £1.5 billion on bad building jobs and register 111,000 complaints against rogue builders.



**Make sure you're not their next victim.**

For more information and advice, call Birmingham City Council's Building and Consultancy Services on 0121 675 7006 or visit [www.birmingham.gov.uk/nailtherogues](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/nailtherogues)

