

# Heritage assets

A guide to Listed Buildings, Locally Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens.

This is a guide to Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Historic Parks and Gardens and Locally Listed Buildings and explains where you can obtain further information. It is not a statement of law. Separate guides are available dealing with archaeological assets and trees in conservation areas.

## What is a heritage asset?

Heritage assets are buildings, structures, archaeological remains or places which are considered to contribute positively to the historic interest of the City. They combine to help create a more interesting and attractive City for the people who live, work and visit here and require special consideration through the planning process.

## Listed Buildings

### What is a listed building?

A listed building is a building or structure considered by the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport to be of national special architectural or historic interest. Several factors will influence this decision, including the age or rarity of the building, technological innovation, architectural or historic associations.

Listing a building in planning law gives it legal protection from demolition or inappropriate alterations which would destroy historic features or affect its character and setting, in order that they can be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

When a building is listed it affects both the exterior and the interior of the building, together with any outbuildings, walls or other structures that were built before 1 July 1948 within the curtilage or grounds of the listed building.

Buildings can be listed as grade I, grade II\* or grade II.

**Grade I** - are buildings of exceptional quality and make up just 1.5% of the total number of listed buildings within the City.

**Grade II\*** - these buildings are considered to be of particular importance (6.8%).

**Grade II** - make up the vast majority (91.7%), and are of special interest.

### How do I find out if a building is listed?

Listed buildings and their descriptions can be found on the Historic England web site. Visit: [historicengland.org.uk](http://historicengland.org.uk)

### How do I request that a building become listed ?

Anyone can put a building forward for listing to Historic England and guidance about doing this can be found at: [historicengland.org.uk](http://historicengland.org.uk)

## Can I make alterations to a listed building?

Listing does not mean that alterations cannot be made to a building. It does mean that any alterations must be in keeping with, and sympathetic to, its age and design. Care should be taken to match original materials and building methods and to avoid damaging features of historic or architectural value.

Listed Building Consent is required for any internal or external alterations or changes to a listed building. Generally listed building consent will be required before you start on:

- Any demolition work, including chimneys, internal and external walls or other buildings or walls within the grounds of the property.
- Any extensions to the building.
- Any other alterations such as a new roof, replacement windows, new gutters etc.

Permission must be applied for BEFORE making any changes or alterations to a listed building. It is a criminal offence to carry out work on listed buildings or properties without permission, and we can prosecute if work is carried out illegally. If convicted in Crown Court the maximum sentence is 2 years or an unlimited fine. The owner may also be required to restore the building to its original condition. This is a serious matter and we would always urge you to seek advice before undertaking works.

## What happens if a listed building is neglected and falls into disrepair?

If a building does fall into disrepair we have powers to carry out whatever repairs are necessary and to recover the costs from the owner. As a last resort we could compulsorily purchase the property to protect it from further deterioration. However, in almost all cases the situation can be resolved by talking to the owner and by giving advice and information to assist the owner in taking care of these buildings.

## Locally Listed Buildings

### What is a locally listed building?

Unlike statutorily listed buildings these buildings and structures are considered to be of local rather than national significance. They are also designated by us rather than the Secretary of Culture, Media and Sport.

Locally listed buildings are graded A, B or C and are added to the list due to their architectural, historical or archaeological interest. They are an important part of the City's unique heritage and identity.

As with statutorily listed buildings if your property is on the local list you should make sure that any work you undertake preserves any features of historic or architectural interest, and is in keeping with the character of the original building and its setting.

## How do I find out if a property is on the local list?

We currently have more than 400 buildings on our local list. If you would like to check whether a building is on the local list visit:

[birmingham.gov.uk/conservation](http://birmingham.gov.uk/conservation)

## Conservation Areas

### What is a conservation area?

In some parts of the City it is not just individual buildings which need to be preserved and protected from unsympathetic change or demolition, but whole areas. Such areas can be designated as conservation areas and we currently have 30 of them across the City. Each is unique and reflects the City's rich and diverse heritage - ranging from the Jewellery Quarter which contains Europe's largest and best surviving group of Victorian and early 20th Century buildings devoted to the manufacture of jewellery and small, decorative, metal goods, to 19th Century Bournville Village internationally acclaimed for the high standards of housing and open spaces it provided for Cadbury's factory workers.

The aim of designating conservation areas is to protect those buildings and space which make a positive contribution to the area's character, and to ensure that any new development is undertaken sympathetically. Homeowners and residents have a valuable role to play by ensuring that any changes made to properties through repairs, maintenance or alterations are in keeping with the character of the buildings and area. Care should be taken to match original materials and methods of construction and to avoid damaging features of historical or architectural value.

## How do I find out if my property is within a conservation area ?

Our web site has details of all conservation areas within the City, visit:

[birmingham.gov.uk/conservationareas](http://birmingham.gov.uk/conservationareas)

## How do we protect conservation areas?

There are a number of powers available to us under planning law to:

- Control new development or redevelopment.
- Control demolition.
- Protect trees.
- Control adverts and hoardings.
- Carry out urgent works to preserve vacant and neglected buildings.
- To give additional protection to conservation areas by applying an Article 4 Direction.
- Adopting character appraisals and management plans.

## What is an Article 4 Direction?

An Article 4 Direction is a mechanism which the Council can use to control minor alterations such as replacing windows and doors, creating a driveway or hard standing, re-roofing, altering a boundary wall etc which would usually not require planning consent. Whilst such changes may be relatively minor in isolation, cumulatively they can significantly erode the character of a conservation area. Article 4 Directions have been introduced in a number of conservation areas in the City. To find out which conservation areas are affected visit:

[birmingham.gov.uk/conservationsareas](http://birmingham.gov.uk/conservationsareas)

## What is a character appraisal and management plan?

Character Appraisals and Management Plans have been produced for a number of the conservation areas within the City. Such documents explain how the conservation areas have evolved and highlight policies to protect their special character. Copies of these documents are available on our web site at:

[birmingham.gov.uk/conservationsareas](http://birmingham.gov.uk/conservationsareas)

## Getting permission to make changes

Before starting any work it is recommended that you check with us first to see whether any consent is required. Works in a conservation area may require planning permission and/or conservation area consent.

In addition trees are protected due to the positive contribution they make to the character of conservation areas.

## Registered Historic Parks and Gardens

### What is a registered historic park and garden?

These are parks and gardens which the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport considers to be of national interest. As with listed buildings they are categorised as grade I, grade II\* or grade II.

There are 15 registered historic parks and gardens in the City and range from the Victorian cemeteries in the Jewellery Quarter to the 1960s Vale parkland landscape. A list of all the registered parks and gardens can be found on the Historic England website:

[historicengland.org.uk](http://historicengland.org.uk)

Works to and within such parks and gardens is a 'material planning consideration'. This means that planning authorities must consider the impact of any proposals on the special character of the area.

## The City Design and Conservation Team

The City Design and Conservation Team provide specialist advice and guidance on all conservation matters including listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, locally listed buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and trees. We would encourage everyone to take an interest in preserving and caring for their property, both for themselves and future generations. To find out more about the Council's planning service, conservation in your area or to obtain plans of conservation areas please see our web site.

# Getting in touch

*The quickest and easiest way of getting in touch:*

## Web

Submit your application here:  
[planningportal.gov.uk/applications](http://planningportal.gov.uk/applications)

Further guidance available here:  
[birmingham.gov.uk/checklists](http://birmingham.gov.uk/checklists)

Further guidance on the Heritage of Birmingham:  
[birmingham.gov.uk/conservation](http://birmingham.gov.uk/conservation)

General planning guidance:  
[birmingham.gov.uk/planning](http://birmingham.gov.uk/planning)

## E-mail

Help submitting your application:  
[planning.registration@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:planning.registration@birmingham.gov.uk)

## Call

Planning and Regeneration general enquiries:  
(0121) 303 1115

## Postal address for paper applications

Planning and Regeneration  
PO Box 28  
Birmingham  
B1 1TU

## Your views

Let us have your comments, compliments or complaints:  
[birmingham.gov.uk/yourviews](http://birmingham.gov.uk/yourviews)

## Other useful contacts

### Historic England

Web: [historicengland.org.uk](http://historicengland.org.uk)

### Garden History Society

Web: [gardenhistorysociety.org.uk](http://gardenhistorysociety.org.uk)

### Georgian Group

Web: [georgiangroup.org.uk](http://georgiangroup.org.uk)

### Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

Web: [spab.org.uk](http://spab.org.uk)

### Twentieth Century Society

Web: [c20society.org.uk](http://c20society.org.uk)

### Victorian Society

Web: [victoriansociety.org.uk](http://victoriansociety.org.uk)

For a copy of this leaflet in large print, alternative format or another language, please contact us.

If you have a speech impairment, are deaf or hard of hearing you can contact Birmingham City Council by Next Generation Text (also known as Text Relay and TypeTalk). Dial 18001 before the full national phone number.

Minicom: (0121) 303 1119 or (0121) 675 8221

You can call the council's Contact Centre using your own advocate to translate for you without written notice. If you need to arrange for this service, go to Brasshouse Translation and Interpreting.