

# Conservatories, Porches and Greenhouses



BUILDINGS  
EXEMPT FROM  
BUILDING  
REGULATIONS

## CONSERVATORIES, PORCHES and GREENHOUSES

Not all buildings and extensions are subject to the Building Regulations. Amongst the works exempted from Building Regulations are:

- Conservatories
- Porches
- Greenhouses



### WHAT IS A CONSERVATORY ?

A conservatory is traditionally for growing tender plants in a semi domestic environment. A conservatory should therefore be predominantly translucent and under the energy conservation requirements, is defined as having a roof at least 75% translucent and walls at least 50% translucent.



## OTHER USES

It is often easier to say what a conservatory or porch is not. For example, porches cannot contain toilets and conservatories cannot be used as kitchens or utility rooms with plumbed in appliances. In these and many other examples of domestic usage, porches and conservatories become domestic extensions for which Building Regulations approval will be required.

## SEPARATION FROM THE DWELLING

Both porches and conservatories must be separated from the house by closable windows and doors. This is to prevent excessive heat loss in winter. Without this separation these extensions would lose their exemption.

## HEATING

To be exempt, conservatories and porches should be unheated or heated in such a way that the heating system can be isolated from the rest of the dwelling. Once again this is to avoid excessive heat loss in structures which may have little, if any, insulation.

## GLAZING

Glass in doors and sidelights and low level glass (below 800mm from internal floor or external ground) must be toughened or laminated to prevent accidental injury.

To summarise, conservatories are exempt if :-

- they are used for the purposes of a conservatory;
- the roof is at least 75% translucent and the walls at least 50%;
- they are separated from the dwelling;
- they are unheated or their heating can be isolated;
- they are at ground level and single storey;
- they have a floor area not exceeding 30m<sup>2</sup>;
- all vulnerable glass is toughened or laminated



Porches are exempt if :-

- they are used as a porch, i.e., a covered approach to an entrance;
- they are separated from the dwelling;
- they are unheated or their heating can be isolated;
- they are at ground level and single storey;
- they have a floor area not exceeding 30m<sup>2</sup>.

## OTHER APPROVALS

Greenhouses, irrespective of their size are exempt from the Building Regulations. This exemption does not apply to greenhouses used for retailing, packaging or exhibiting.

### NOTE

- The exemptions overleaf refer only to domestic porches and conservatories. In commercial property, exemption is less clear cut and the Building Control Section should always be consulted.
- If you intend to provide electrical installations to any exempt buildings, which in either case receives its electricity from a source shared with or located inside a dwelling, then a Building Regulations application is required for the electrical work.
- The exemptions overleaf relate to Building Regulations. These should not be confused with Planning Permission. The Planning Division will advise on exemptions under the Planning Act. Please always check with the Planning Division before commencing any work.

(Planning enquiry line - 01263 516152)



## NORTH NORFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

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All surveyors can be contacted by mobile telephone

FOR QUERIES CONCERNING  
BUILDING REGULATION CHARGES  
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Building Control Surveyors are available Monday to Friday  
between 8.30 and 10.30 am or at other times  
by prior appointment. All inspections requested before  
10.30 am will be carried out the same day.

The Building Control Team is committed to maintaining  
standards in building based on a professional and publicly  
accountable service. We have a wealth of local knowledge,  
experience and, being on the spot, can respond quickly to  
your needs.

If you would like this information in large print,  
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