

# GUIDANCE NOTES

Produced by

Tendring District Council  
Building Control Service



## Hiring a Builder

## TIPS TO HELP YOU HIRE A BUILDER

If you are considering any work to your property, and you require a builder, you should consider this choice very carefully. As this is one of the biggest investments you are likely to make you should thoroughly check any builder out before employing their services.

Here are some things you should consider doing:

- For large projects consider employing a professional to advise you.  
*Addresses and contact numbers of professional organisations are on the back of this sheet.*
- Discuss the extent of your arrangement with your professional.  
*Does it involve the preparation of plans only, or is site supervision part of the package?*
- If you consider your job so small you don't require a professional, get advice from someone in the industry who you know and trust.
- Always obtain quotations (at least three) and have them checked. An estimate is a rough guide, a quotation is usually a fixed price. Check if it includes VAT.
- **Don't automatically go for the cheapest quote - you may pay more in the end!**
- Ask questions of the builder:
  - Try to get a personal recommendation or ask for references from previous clients.
  - What is their expertise in the particular project you intend to carry out?
- Do they want to be paid on completion or in stages? Don't pay for the work until it is completed to your satisfaction, but do expect to pay a deposit to cover the cost of materials.
- Get a time schedule and completion date in writing and state the standard of work required and on what basis either party should terminate the contact.
- Will they accept a penalty clause on failure to complete on time? A Building Contract for homeowners/occupiers can be obtained from the Joint Contracts Tribunal [here](#)
- Check what guarantees are being given. What does it cover, and who is it underwritten by.
- Check that your contractor has public liability insurance.
- Be realistic about costs. Cut price jobs can be trouble. If it is too good to be true, it probably is.
- Be assertive - you are paying for the work. If you have a problem discuss it with the head of the company.
- If you are having major work done get an independent architect, surveyor or building engineer to supervise the project and to control costs.
- Finally, reassure yourself by checking out the quality of the builder's work, his references and any other aspects like work habits. Speak with his previous clients. Have your friends, family and neighbours got any experience of his work?

**Be Safe...Be Sure...  
NOT SORRY!**

## **USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS**

[Chartered Institute of Building](#)

[Royal Institution of British Architects \(RIBA\)](#)

[Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors \(RICS\)](#)

[Essex Chamber of Commerce](#)

[National Federation of Builders](#)

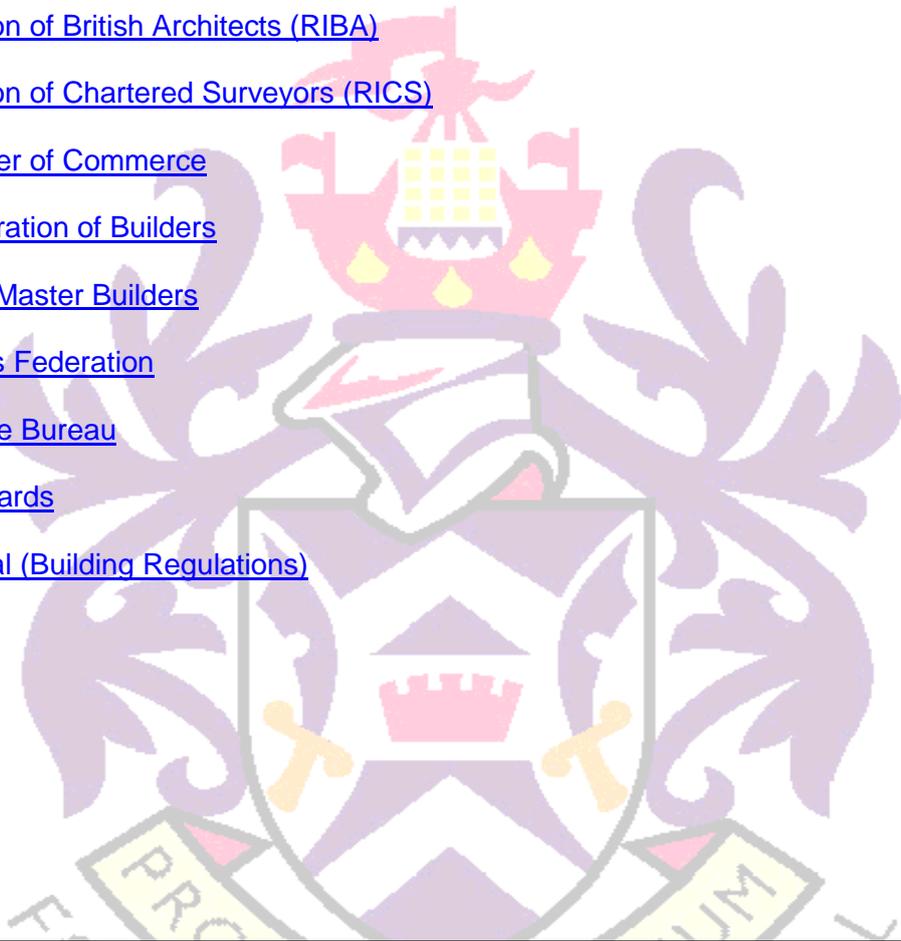
[Federation of Master Builders](#)

[Home Builders Federation](#)

[Citizens Advice Bureau](#)

[Trading Standards](#)

[Planning Portal \(Building Regulations\)](#)



**For More Information please call  
Tendring Building Control  
01255 686131**

**or email us at [BCInspections@tendringdc.gov.uk](mailto:BCInspections@tendringdc.gov.uk)**

**or alternatively call into our offices in Thorpe Road  
Weeley, CO16 9AJ.**

**Other guidance leaflets can be downloaded using the following link:**

**[Click here for further guides](#)**