BESA
BUILDING ENGINEERING SERVICES ASSOCIATION

# BUILDING REGULATIONS & HIGH RISK BUILDINGS (SCOTLAND)

BESA MEMBER BRIEFING



V1. Nov 2026

## Overview

The Scottish Government is introducing a new **Compliance Plan Approach (CPA)** to strengthen how compliance with building regulations is planned, monitored and evidenced during the design and construction of High Risk Buildings (HRBs).

The aim is to identify compliance issues earlier, improve accountability and make sure there is sufficient evidence that completed building work meets the required standard.

The CPA is being introduced in phases through national guidance, ahead of anticipated legislation during the **2026–2031 Scottish parliamentary term.** Full industry adoption is currently voluntary, although local authority building standards verifiers have been expected to apply the new guidance to defined projects since April 2026.

# WHICH BUILDINGS ARE AFFECTED?

Scotland has adopted a broader definition of HRBs than England.

The current guidance covers qualifying major works involving:

- Domestic and residential buildings over 11 metres in height.
- Educational, community and sports buildings.
- Non-domestic public buildings under local authority control.
- Hospitals.
- Residential care buidlings.

Major works are assesed according to factors such as scale, complexity, life, safety risks, escape routes, vulnerable occupants and cladding alterations.

**The local authroity building standards verifier determines whether proposed works fall within the scope of the CPA.**

**When does it apply?**

| DATE | IMPLEMENTATION |
|---|---|
| **1 April 2026** | Verifier guidance applies to new-build HRBs and major cladding remediation works requiring a building warrant |
| **1 January 2027** | Verifier guidance extends to other major works to HRBs |
| **2026-2031** | Anticipated legislation to make the CPA mandatory and introduce a statuory Compliance Plan Manager role |

Industry is encouraged to adopt the approach voluntarily in line with this phased implementation.

## WHAT IS CHANGING?

The CPA builds on Scotland's existing building standards system, replacing the Construction Compliance Notification Plan (CCNP) with a more comprehensive Compliance Plan for projects within scope.

The main changes are:

**1. Earlier engagement**
Project teams should enagge with the local authority verifier at least **12 weeks before submitting the first buildings warrant application** to disucss compliance risks, responsibilities and evidence requirements.

**2. A more detailed Compliance Plan**
The plan identifies inspections, notifications, information checkpoints and evidence needed to demonstrate compliance throughout construction.

**3. Clearer responsibilities**
A nominated duly authroised agent coordinates the process on behalf of the Relevant Person (usually the owner or developer). A statuory Compliance Plan Manager role is expected to be introduced through the future legislation.

**4. Ongoing evidence and verification**
Compliance evidence must be recorded and provided at agreed stages. The verifier updates the Compliance Plan as work progresses, including inspections and checks undertaken.

**5 .Evidence at completion**
The completed Compliance Plan supports the Relevant Person's completion certificate submission and the verifier's decision on whether to accept it.

## WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

- **Relevant Person:** Usually the owner or developer, with legal responsibility for compliance and submitting the completion certificate.
- **Duly Authorised Agent:** Coordinates the CPA process on behalf of the Relevant Person during the current implementation phase.
- **Compliance Plan Manager:** A proposed future statutory role responsible for managing and coordinating the Compliance Plan, with specific duties expected to be established through legislation.
- **Designers and Contractors:** Responsible for compliant design and construction and providing supporting evidence.
- **Building Standards Verifier:** The local authority responsible for assessing building warrant applications, undertaking reasonable inquiry and considering completion certificates.

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR BESA MEMBERS?

Building services contractors involved in affected Scottish projects should prepare for greater scrutiny of how compliance is demonstrated during construction.

Members should:

- Confirm early whether the projects falls within the CPA.
- Understand the Compliance Plan requirements and their responsibilities for providing evidence.
- Maintain records of installation, inspections, testing, commissioning and design changes.
- Ensure contractor- designed elements and specialists works are appropriately documented.
- Provide evidence and notify the project team at the required stages, rather than waiting until handover.

**The key message:** Compliance must be planned, managed and evidenced throughout the project, not demonstrated retrospectively at completion.

### Further guidance

The Scottish Government has published detailed guidance and supporting model forms:

- Background and implementation of the CPA
- Industry guidance – Phase 1 CPA
- Building Standards Verifiers guidance
- Pre-Warrant Compliance and Procedural Model Form
- Compliance Plan Model Form

BESA will continue to monitor developments, including the proposed legislation and Compliance Plan Manager requirements, and provide further updates as the regime progresses.