

# Installation of satellite television dishes: householder's planning guide

## Introduction

This Planning Guide is the Government's statement of good practice on the siting of satellite television dish antennas in England and Wales. It has been prepared with, and agreed by, representatives of the satellite television industry and local planning authorities.

The purpose of this guide is:

- **First** to protect our environment from unnecessarily large, unsympathetic or poorly sited satellite dishes.
- **Second** to make you, as a householder, aware of the need for the appropriate siting of satellite dishes.
- **Third** to help retailers and installers provide improved advice and service to householders on the siting of satellite dishes.

**Before you buy or rent a dish, check whether you need planning permission, listed building consent or owner's/ landlord's consent.**

**Remember, you are responsible for the appropriate siting of satellite dishes; if you have any doubt, contact the planning department of your local council or seek independent professional advice.**

## Checklist for Selection, Purchase, and Installation

1. Check if you need the landlord's, or owner's consent.
2. Don't allow a dish to be installed without first finding out whether or not you need planning permission or listed building consent.
3. Use reputable and authorised suppliers and installers.
4. Select a dish no larger than the minimum required for good reception.
5. Site the dish in an inconspicuous place, preferably where your neighbours and the public cannot see it.
6. Avoid breaking the skyline with the dish and, whenever possible don't site it in front of the house.
7. Select a dish that blends in with its chosen background.

***Respect the environment. The cheapest option may not be the most environmentally friendly.***

***Don't forget that you are responsible for having it installed; poor siting may lead the council to require you to re-site the dish at your own expense.***

***Satellite TV technology continues to evolve: you should be aware of the different kinds of system so that you can make an informed choice.***

## Is a planning application required?

A general permission exists under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995, as amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) Order 1998 for satellite dishes in certain circumstances. These are explained below according to different house types and areas.

*If you are a tenant or a leaseholder (i.e. you do not own the house you live in), then the landlord's or owner's consent to install a dish is usually required, unless it has already been given, as well as any other necessary permissions.*

### **1 Do you live in a house that is not in a conservation area, a National park, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Norfolk Boards?**

Then you do **not** need to apply for planning permission to install a dish on that house, provided that:

- there will not be more than **one** dish on the building or in the garden;
- the dish does not exceed **90cm** in size;
- if the dish is installed on the roof, it does not protrude above the highest part of the roof;
- in the case of an installation on a **chimney stack**, the dish does not exceed **45cm** in size and is not higher than the highest part of the stack.

### **2 Do you live in a larger block of flats (of or over 15m in height - approximately over five storeys)?**

Then you do **not** need to apply for planning permission to install a dish, provided that:

- the building is not in a conservation area, a National Park, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Broads;
- the number of dishes (including terrestrial dish antennas) on the **building as a whole** does not exceed **two**;
- the dish does not exceed **1.3m** in size.

### **3 Do you live in a flat in a small block of flats or commercial premises (below 15m in height) or plan to install a dish on a commercial property (e.g. shop, pub, club, etc)? Or do you live in a dwelling house in a conservation area, a National Park, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or the Broads?**

Then you do **not** need to apply for planning permission to install a dish, provided that:

- the dish **does not exceed** the limits on size, number and siting that are set out in paragraph 1 above, and the installation is not on a chimney stack, nor on the wall or roofslope **fronting the road or public footpath** (or, in the case of the Broads, fronting the waterway).

In the case of flats, these limits refer to the **building as a whole** and not to each separate flat. If, therefore, one flat dweller has already installed a dish, planning permission is required for further installations. However, in such a case, the flat dweller may wish to examine the possibility of a **shared dish**.

Your supplier or installer may generally be able to advise whether an application for planning permission is required for installing a dish in a particular place. If there is any doubt you should

contact the planning department of your local council; the department provides application forms if planning permission is required.

***It is your responsibility for seeking, or not seeking, planning permission. If required, planning permission should be granted before installation.***

***Size means the measurement across any dimension of the antenna (excluding any projecting feed element, the reinforcing rim and supporting brackets).***

Some buildings are 'listed' because of their special historic or architectural interest. If you live in a 'listed building', you will need to consult your local planning department. The department can advise if the building is 'listed'. If it is, you will generally need to apply for 'listed building consent', if you wish to install a dish on that building. This consent is different from planning permission and must not be confused with it.

***Listed building consent is required for any dish that affects the character or appearance of a listed building or its setting.***

**Do you need planning permission? Have a look at the visual guide available at the foot of this document.**

## **Minimising the Impact**

***It is a condition of installing a dish that you must site it in such a way that minimises its impact on the external appearance of the building and remove it when no longer needed.***

You have the responsibility for the **selection** , the **siting**, the **sympathetic appearance** of any dish that you buy or rent.

In coming to a decision on the selection and siting of a dish, you should take account of its impact on the **neighbours** , the **public** , the **environment**.

The retailer or installer may be able to advise you on these matters, but if there is any doubt, then you should contact your local planning department.

## **Considerations for Selection, Siting and Appearance**

- a white dish may blend against a white background but may be conspicuous against darker backgrounds;
- a mesh or transparent dish may be less obtrusive than a solid one;
- the location of a dish on a rear wall of the building or in the garden protected by shrubs (be careful not to disrupt the line-of-sight) is usually less conspicuous than siting it on the front of the building;
- the performance of a dish is not affected by whether it is located higher up or lower down on a building, as long as the line-of-sight with the satellite is not affected;
- a small dish hidden behind a parapet or a chimney stack may be less conspicuous than one on the wall;
- special consideration will be necessary where a satellite dish is to be installed on, or within the grounds, of a listed building (subject to listed building consent - see above). Where it is

not possible to conceal the dish from view on the building, e.g. in a roof valley or behind a parapet, it may be better to site the dish at ground level elsewhere within the garden;

- dishes are available in a range of makes and appearances; the choice is therefore important.

Generally the environmental concern stems from poor selection or siting of a dish or from a dish colour and appearance that contrasts conspicuously with its background.

## **The Consequence of Poor Siting**

If your planning department thinks a dish has been sited poorly and could reasonably be positioned less conspicuously, you may be asked to re-site the dish at your own expense without having to apply for planning permission.

If such a request is refused, your planning department may then:

- a. require you to make a planning application (for which a charge is payable) on the basis that the impact of the dish on the external appearance of the building has not been minimised

**or**

- b. serve you with an enforcement notice requiring the siting of the dish to be altered in a specified way.

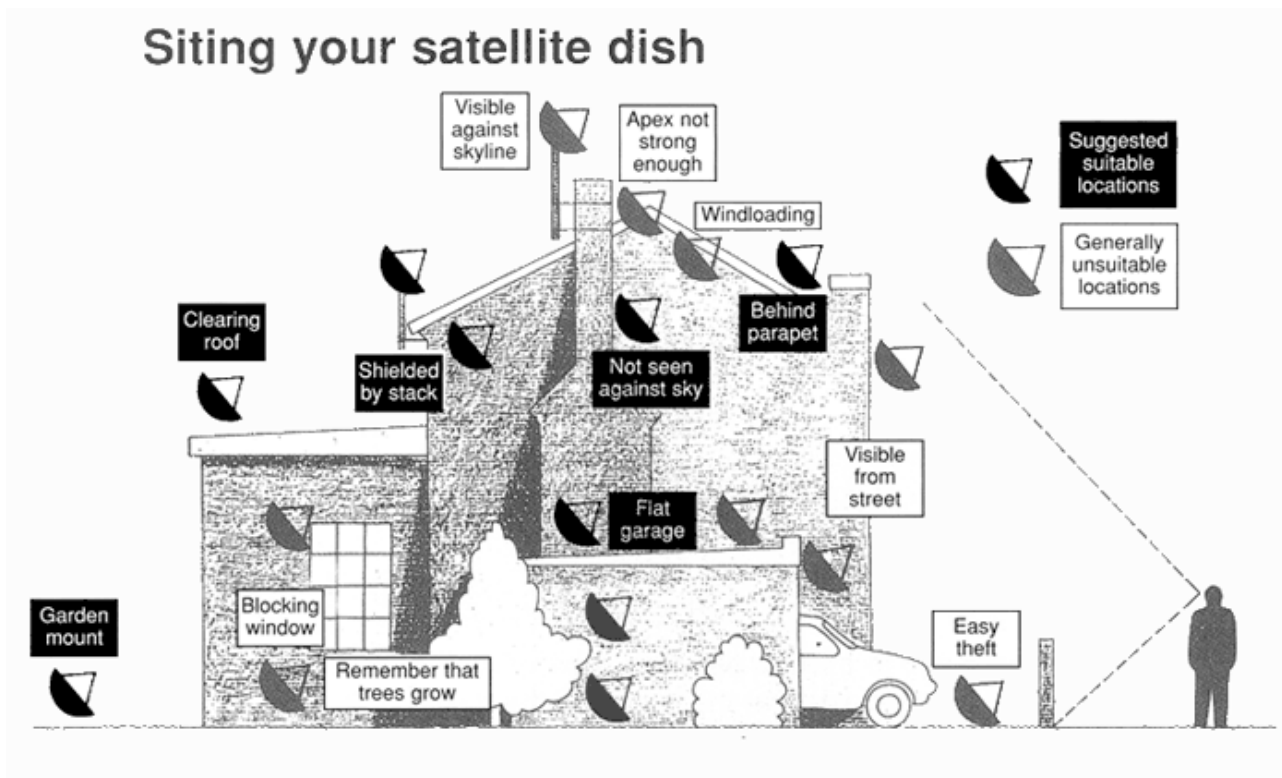
You are entitled to appeal if planning permission is sought and refused or if an enforcement notice is served. Grounds for an appeal could include your consideration that the chosen location is appropriate or that the measures required to be taken are excessive, perhaps giving rise to unreasonable costs.

***Failure to comply with an enforcement notice is an offence which can lead to a fine, unless you have successfully appealed against it.***

***It is in your best interest to ensure the proper selection, siting and appearance of your dish from the beginning.***

Your planning department, in seeking re-siting, should use these guidelines to show, on a diagram, reasonable measures that can be taken to achieve significantly less visible locations that satisfy line-of-sight requirements and picture quality. The council cannot use this power to deny you the right to install a dish; the purpose of this guide is to give guidance on how the regulations on siting will be interpreted.

***You should remove any dish which is no longer needed, for example if you change from a dish to a cable system.***



### Choice of Suppliers and Installers

Suppliers and installers should be familiar with the planning and environmental aspects of installation.

You are strongly advised to obtain your satellite reception equipment from reputable suppliers, e.g. members of the **Radio, Electrical and Television Retailers' Association (RETRA)**, other established companies, or, where appropriate, from the broadcaster.

You are also advised to use installers who are members of the **Confederation of Aerial Industries Limited (CAI)** or other professionally qualified installers who adhere to an appropriate Code of Practice in line with this Planning Guide.

Reputable installers should have **agreed standards** for their work, in some cases guaranteed by their company; they should also be covered by Public Liability and Employer's Liability **insurance**.

Obtain **quotations** for alternative siting options and costs (e.g. on rear wall) prior to installation.

***Remember, the cheapest installation option may not be the most environmentally acceptable.***

### Alternatives to Individual Dishes

If you live in

- a tower block
- a small block of flats
- a terrace of houses
- a semi-detached house

it may be possible to receive satellite TV broadcasts without the need for each household to install an individual satellite dish. There are two main alternatives to an individual dish:

### **Shared Dish Systems**

Communal satellite TV systems are worth looking into if:

- planning permission is unlikely to be granted for several dishes on a single building;
- you think a communal system would be more environmentally friendly than for each home to have its own dish;
- landlords or owners have prohibited individual dishes.

If you live in a tower block or large group of flats or houses, you should check first of all what provision, if any, has already been made for a communal system.

There may be a number of technical and cost options in establishing a communal system; professional advice should be obtained to ensure the chosen system offers the optimum choice of programmes at a reasonable price and with the capacity to accommodate future services.

If you live in a semi-detached or terraced house, it may be possible to develop a shared system but it may be more expensive than installing individual dishes. You may require legal advice on the conditions for sharing. In any event, you should ensure that any shared system provides access to all the desired programmes.

The same planning regulations apply to communal or shared dishes as apply to individual dishes.

It is the responsibility of the landlord or the building owner to decide whether or not to allow the installation of a communal satellite TV system and to obtain any licence. Guidelines on licensing are available from the Department of Trade and Industry and OFTEL. Enquiries should be made to those bodies at the addresses below.

### **Cable Networks**

You may wish to ask your council whether your area is served by cable television. This is particularly important where:

- your home or building does not have a line-of-sight with the desired satellite;
- where planning permission for a dish is not granted;
- where a shared system is not feasible;
- where you do not wish to have the dish on the outside of your property.

Cable networks can be another way of bringing satellite TV broadcasts to your home.

### **Useful Addresses**

#### **Department for Transport, Local Government and the Regions**

Development Control Policy Division  
Eland House,  
Bressenden Place  
London SW1E 5DU

**National Assembly for Wales**

Planning Division,  
Cathays Park  
Cardiff CF1 3NO

**Independent Television Commission**

33 Foley Street,  
London W1W 7TL  
Tel 020 7225 3000

**Confederation of Aerial Industries Limited (CAI)**

Fulton House Business Centre  
Fulton Road,  
Wembley Park  
Middlesex HA9 0TF  
Tel 020 8902 8998

**Radio, Electrical and Television Retailers' Association (RETRA) Ltd**

Retra House,  
St John's Terrace  
1 Amphill Street,  
Bedford MK42 9EY  
Tel 01234 269110

**Department of Trade & Industry**

Communications and Information Industries Directorate  
151 Buckingham Palace Road  
London SW1W 9SS

**Office of Telecommunications (OFTEL)**

Licensing Policy Branch,  
50 Ludgate Hill  
London EC4M 7JJ  
Tel: 020 7634 8700