



Glazing in Listed Buildings

Buildings are given listed status by the local authority due to their significance in the local built environment, they form part of the history of the town or city where they are located and often have special architectural features that need to be protected from un-sympathetic development.

Living in a listed property comes with its own challenges, not least of which is improving comfort, reducing heating bills and our carbon footprint in a property that was never designed with a great focus on heat insulation.

Therefore when looking to **upgrade windows in a Listed Building** the first port of call must always be to **gain approval** from the **local Conservation Officer** to any change in the building that may be affected by its listed status.

Existing windows are a natural focal point for heat loss and one of the most common requests is to double glaze the existing single glazed windows. Assuming that an efficient draught reduction system has been fitted and secondary glazing (which usually does not require listed building consent) has been ruled out due to internal features such as shutters, then application for double glazing may be appropriate.

Existing period timber windows have very small glazing rebates. Re-working the rebates to make them deeper can often be difficult and will result in a change to the existing timber mouldings. So trying to squeeze a standard slim double glazed unit into the rebates raises problems. Often they use modern flat glass which gives an unsightly double reflection, and there are many examples where the black edge spacer is clearly visible around each pane. Attempts are made to reduce this sealant / spacer 'sightline', however, there is growing concern at the number of Insulating Glass Units (IGUs) failures even after a very short service life. This is due to the lack of adequate sealant and desiccant within the IGU. Also the amount of face putty can be so small as to be in-effective for water run-off. It's easy to understand why Conservation Officers are concerned about the visual impact on listed buildings.

One possible solution is the use of the new generation of vacuum glazed IGUs such as Pilkington **Spacia**™. At only 6.5mm thick, with none of the normal edge spacer problems and no double reflection, it can often replace single glazing and be barely noticeable yet improve the thermal efficiency by a factor of 5. It also has achieves higher levels of sound insulation than conventional glazing

To see how Listed Buildings are Chosen review the following text.

How Are Listed Buildings Chosen

Buildings are selected for a range of qualities, the most significant being their age. The older a building is the more likely it is to be listed. Modern buildings are listed but they need to be particularly special in order to qualify. All buildings built before 1700 which have survived in anything like their original condition are listed. Most buildings dating from between 1700 and 1840 are listed, although some selectivity is applied, while buildings from 1840 to 1914 are selected on the basis of their demonstrating technological advances, being the work of particular architects, or possessing some notable feature. More recent post-war buildings are also now being considered for listing.

The very wide definition of 'building' in The Town and Country Planning Act (1990) – "Any structure or erection, and any part of a building, as so defined" – allows any man-made structure, from barns to bridges and telephone boxes to grave stones, to be listed buildings.

Listed Status - England and Wales

Grade I

Buildings are of exceptional interest; only 2.5% of listed buildings are Grade I.

Grade II*

Buildings are particularly important, being of more than special interest; 5.5% of listed buildings are Grade II*.

Grade II

Buildings of special architectural or historic interest; 92% of listed buildings are Grade II.

In England there are approximately 376,000 listed building entries amounting to over 500,000 listed buildings. It is hard to be precise as one list entry for example, can cover a row of terraced houses.

Listed Status Scotland

Category A

Buildings of national or international importance, either architectural or historic, or fine little-altered examples of some particular period, style or building type.

Category B

Buildings of regional or more than local importance, or major examples of some particular period, style or building type which may have been altered.

Category C

Buildings of local importance, lesser examples of any periods, style or building type, as originally constructed or altered; and simple, traditional buildings which group well with others in categories A and B or are part of a planned group such as an estate or an industrial complex.

Northern Ireland uses a similar system to Scotland with grades A, B+, B1 and B2.