

# Dangerous structures

Everything you need to know:



Structures can become dangerous for a variety of reasons ranging from a lack of maintenance, vandalism, subsidence, design defects or more dramatic causes such as vehicle impact, fire, explosion and storm damage. In fact, any structure which as a result of its condition could endanger people, will potentially be a dangerous structure.

## What is a dangerous structure?

The term 'Dangerous structure' covers not only a building or parts of buildings, but other structures such as garden walls, fences and hoardings.

## Who do I tell?

Local Authorities (LA's) have the task of ensuring that the public are safe from the effects of an unsafe structure. In order to carry out this function, the LA's are granted legislative powers under Section 77 and 78 of the Building Act 1984 to use when these situations arise.

East Suffolk Council Building Control department operates a 24 hr a day, 365 days a year standby cover for the event of these occurrences.

To report a potentially dangerous structure, please phone **01394 444219** or **0800 440 2516** for out of hours emergencies.

Please provide basic information regarding the location and nature of the danger, together with your perceived level of risk (low/ medium/high) and your contact information.

## What Happens Next?

- A Surveyor will attempt to contact you directly and reach the location within two hours of having received the incident report.

- They will assess the nature and level of risk to property owners and the public.
- The primary function is to ensure people are safe from the effect of the situation and this may include helping to arrange safety fencing and barriers to restrict access to a location.

## The level of danger encountered will result in the following possible outcomes:

**Imminent:** These structures are at risk of collapse and must be secured for public safety. The owner will normally be recharged for emergency works carried out in these cases since the prime responsibility for the condition of a building or structure lies with its owner.

**Hazardous:** These structures are found to be unstable by surveyors but not imminently dangerous. The owner is given a reasonable time to remove the danger. Failure to respond may result in a Magistrates Court Order being obtained.

**Not Dangerous:** These structures may be suffering but are not currently presenting a danger to occupants or the public at the time of the inspection.

*Please be advised that property owners will be liable for the costs incurred in removing any danger. Please check your Home insurance policy, it may help in this regard.*

Still have a query? Did you know that we do offer 1 hours free pre application consultation for those who need it. Contact us today at [buildingcontrol@eastsuffolk.gov.uk](mailto:buildingcontrol@eastsuffolk.gov.uk) / 01502 523072