

[The Building \(Local Authority Charges\) Regulations 2010](#) [1]

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Daft Regulation of the Month

You may well consider it reasonable for local authorities to charge users for their supervision of building regulations. Someone has to keep an eye on developers and if the developers themselves did not pay, the rest of us would be subsidising them. Local authorities should aim to recover their costs but not profit from this activity. The basic law dates from 1984.

So far well and good. What is daft is re-stating this with supposedly new regulations every few years thereby wasting the time of the local authorities, parliament and the civil service. On reflection maybe that keeps them out of worse mischief. These regulations were laid before parliament on 25th February and they are full of splendid Whitehallsese. For example a 'building' means any permanent or temporary building but not any other kind of structure or erection, and a reference to a building includes a reference to part of a building. In other words, a building means a building. That's a relief.

The regulations say absolutely nothing of any substance: trust me, I read them several times. For example, it doesn't say anything about what can be included in costs or what the charges ought to be.

Whoever dreamt up this nonsense will soon be providing regulations allowing ice cream sellers to charge for their ice creams. How would ice cream sellers know that they could charge if the government didn't tell them? In the case of these building regulations, local authorities may not only charge for their services but collect the money as well. Just as well they mentioned that.

This blog is part of the ongoing series: Daft regulation of the month. The first port of call for any government that is really committed to cutting useless red tape. Click [here](#)[3] to find out more.

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