

Meeting with your architect

A guide for consumers

Please note this is meant as a guide only and is not an exhaustive list. The ARB recommends that you give careful consideration to exactly what you require from your architect prior to any meeting, and that you take notes and explain your requirements to your architect clearly. You may wish to ask if there is any charge for the meeting.



Questions to ask

Name of architect

Is this person registered with the ARB? *

To check the register please visit <http://architects-register.org.uk/>

Yes No

*** IMPORTANT - If the individual is not registered with the ARB they are not an architect and should not be using the title architect. If you are meeting with an individual from an architect's practice, someone at the practice should be registered with the ARB.**

Before you meet your architect

- Before you meet with your architect for the first time, it's worth spending some time writing down what you want to achieve. For example, you might want an architect's advice, you might only want them to apply for planning permission, you might want them to obtain quotes for the building work or you might want them to manage every part of the project for you from start to finish.
 - Have these notes with you so that you can look over them during the meeting. It is important to give your architect as much information as possible so that they have a clear understanding of what it is you want.
 - After the meeting you should make sure that the architect provides you with written confirmation of what it is they will do and how much it will cost, before they are instructed to undertake any work.
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Before the meeting:

Please use this space to make some notes before you meet with your architect.

What do you want to achieve?

(For example a new extension to a house, a conversion of a property or a new dwelling etc.)

What do you want the architect to do for you?

(For example obtain planning permission, provide you with drawings for construction purposes, obtain quotes, project manage the work etc. If you want the architect to project manage the work explain what you envisage this role being.)

What is your budget?

Do you have any time constraints?

During the meeting with your architect:

When meeting an architect, he or she will want to talk to you about your building project so they understand what you are looking for. You should take your architect's advice into account when making decisions, but if they suggest something that you are not comfortable with, please say so. If you both clearly understand what you want at this early stage, it may prevent problems as the project progresses. It is your project, and the architect will want to make sure that you are satisfied with the end result.

What does the architect advise?

Are your proposals achievable on your budget?

(You should remember that your budget will also need to cover any third party costs such as structural engineers and surveyors etc.)

You should consider asking the architect about the following:

What is the architect's fee?

How will it be calculated and are there any other extra costs?

(For example a job price, percentage of the construction cost, hourly rate etc.)

Ask about who will be the point of contact during the project:

How often will the architect update you on the progress of your project?

Who will be undertaking the work?

(Are they registered with ARB? If not who will be the architect(s) supervising the work?)

How do you want to be contacted – in writing/email, via phone or face to face?

What information does the architect need from you before they can start work?

Do you have any concerns?

When you have agreed with the architect what you want them to do, they must record the terms of that agreement in writing.

The Small Print

At the very least, the agreement should state:

- The contracting parties
- What work the architect will do
- What the fee will be, or how it will be worked out
- Who will be responsible for what on the project
- Any constraints or limitations on the responsibilities of the parties
- Any special provisions for cancelling the agreement
- Whether there are any special terms for settling disputes
- That the architect has adequate and appropriate insurance cover
- What you should do if you have a complaint about their service

Any agreed variations to the written agreement should be recorded in writing.

The architect should also let you know that you can complain to us if you have a complaint about their conduct or competence that they can't sort out.

Contact Us

If you have any questions or comments please feel free to contact us.

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