

Domestic clients: roles and responsibilities

Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015)

CDM 2015 makes a distinction between domestic clients and [commercial clients](#), who commission construction work as part of their business.

A domestic client is any individual who has construction work carried out on their home, or the home of a family member, that is **not** done as part of any business. While CDM 2015 places client duties on commercial clients in full, such duties for domestic clients normally pass to:

- the [contractor](#), if it is a single contractor project, who must take on the legal duties of the client in addition to their own as contractor. In practice, this should involve little more than what they normally do in managing health and safety risks
- the [principal contractor](#), for projects with more than one contractor, who must take on the legal duties of the client in addition to their own as principal contractor. If the domestic client has not appointed a principal contractor, the client duties must be carried out by the contractor in control of the construction work

If a domestic client has appointed an architect (or other [designer](#)) on a project involving more than one contractor, they can ask them to manage the project and take on the client duties instead of the principal contractor. The designer then takes on the responsibilities of [principal designer](#) and must have a written agreement with the domestic client, confirming they have agreed (as principal designer) to take on the client duties as well as their own responsibilities.

Any designer in charge of coordinating and managing a project is assumed to be the principal designer. However, if they do not have a written agreement with the domestic client to confirm they are taking on the client duties, those duties automatically pass to the principal contractor.

Extract from HSE Website

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/construction/cdm/2015/domestic-clients.htm>

21 July 2015