Improvements and Alterations

The recent fashion in TV programmes encouraging you to improve your home and ‘Do-It-Yourself’ may make you think about changes you’d like to make in your house.

In the majority of cases we will have no objection to you carrying out DIY improvements but before you start any work you must contact your Housing Office and tell us what you intend to do.

You **MUST** wait until you receive the conditions of the consent before you start the work.

**IMPROVING OR ALTERING YOUR PROPERTY - GETTING PERMISSION**

If you wish to make any alterations or improvements to your property, other than normal decoration, you will have to apply to your local Housing Office for permission.

This is called ‘Landlord’s Consent’ and the rules guiding how we deal with such requests are set out in law. This is to make sure that the work you carry out is completed to the highest standard is safe and, where necessary, complies with Building and Planning Regulations.

**WHAT TYPE OF WORK DO YOU NEED CONSENT FOR?**

The definition of an improvement means **any alteration in** or **addition to** a dwelling house, and includes:

- any addition or alteration to the internal fixtures fittings or internal/external fabric of the building.

  *This includes; kitchen and bathroom fittings or fixtures, doors, windows, walls, fireplaces, patios, steps, pathways, gates, fences, hardstandings, driveways or adding on porches, external lights, garages, sheds, wooden flooring, artexing, garden decking.*

- any addition or alteration connected with the provision of services.

  *Including heating, lighting, and water services.*

- the erection of a wireless or radio aerial or satellite dish.

- the carrying out of external decoration.

  *Such as the painting of the outside of doors, windows, gates or walls.*

**COMMUNAL AREAS**

Improvements and alterations to communal areas are considered on a case-by-case basis. Please seek further advice from your local Housing Office before undertaking any work or placing any items within these areas.

**IF YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT CARRYING OUT ANY OF THE ABOVE IMPROVEMENTS PLEASE CONTACT US BEFORE YOU START**
WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Once we’ve received your request a visit may be required to discuss the proposal with you. If the work affects your neighbours you will have to contact them to make sure they have no objections. You will also be requested to follow any required guidance or conditions indicated as part of the landlord’s consent.

If your improvements need Planning or Building Regulation approval you will have to apply for these yourself **before you can proceed**. There may be a cost this which is payable by you. When you’ve done this you will have to provide the Housing Office with copies before we can give permission for you to go ahead.

We will categorise the improvement in line with our current policy and procedure, ensure your plans comply with Building and/or Planning Regulations and inform you as quickly as possible if you can proceed.

WHY DO YOU NEED OUR PERMISSION?

We have to make sure that the alterations or improvements you carry out are:

- Safe
- We have to make sure that the alterations or improvements you carry out are safe
- Do not devalue the property
- Comply with building regulations
- Do not cause problems or interfere with the services provided to other tenants
- Do not make your property more expensive to maintain

If you carry out improvements like installing central heating you could be eligible for compensation if you later leave the property.

If we have to take over the maintenance of the alteration or improvement, you may find you will be charged by us for this service, if you have not asked for consent before you did the work.

This would also apply if the work is faulty or does not comply with current Building or Planning regulations and we have to return your home to its original state in order to make it safe for you to live there.

**IF YOU’RE GOING TO D.I.Y REMEMBER THE COUNCIL HAS NO OBLIGATION TO MAINTAIN WORK WHICH HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT WITHOUT PERMISSION.**

**ALWAYS ASK FOR LANDLORD’S CONSENT BEFORE YOU MAKE ANY ALTERATIONS OR IMPROVEMENTS.**