

# Alterations and Improvements

## Information Leaflet



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## 1. About this leaflet

- 1.1 This leaflet provides the answers to questions on procedures to be followed by tenants who wish to carry out alterations or improvements to their homes.
- 1.2 This leaflet along with other information we provide can be produced in other formats e.g. large print or other languages if required. If you need this service please let us know.

## 2. Do I need permission to carry out alterations or improvements to my house?

- 2.1 The answer to this question is...yes. In accordance with paragraph 5.3 of your tenancy agreement you may alter, improve or enlarge the house or its fixtures or fittings. You may also add new fixtures or fittings.
- 2.2 Your tenancy agreement requires you to obtain our prior written permission and all other necessary local authority approvals, for example, planning permission or building warrants **before** carrying out any works.
- 2.3 We will not unreasonably withhold our consent, but we may make it conditional upon work being carried out to a standard specified by us. This can include reference to materials, workmanship, layout and so on.

### **3. What kinds of alterations or improvements do I need your written consent for?**

3.1 The definition of an alteration or improvement is very wide ranging and the following are simply examples and not an exhaustive list:

- Installing a satellite dish
- Building a garage or shed
- Installing a driveway
- Erecting a fence or wall
- Laying a patio or decking
- Fitting external lighting
- Fitting an external water tap
- Replacing kitchen units, worktops or changing layouts
- Removing built in cupboards
- Altering heating systems
- Installing a toilet bowl, wash hand basin or bath
- Fitting a shower
- Installing a burglar alarm
- Altering the electrical system
- Fitting door locks

3.2 You may be entitled to statutory compensation for certain improvements when you end your tenancy but only if you have our written permission and agreement to pay compensation. You will be advised if this applies at the time we give you our consent for the works.

#### **4. Why must I get your written permission before I do any work?**

4.1 This requirement enables you to comply with the terms of your tenancy agreement; it enables the Co-operative to control the quality of work carried out on its properties thus ensuring that standards are maintained and allows us to comply with legislation where appropriate.

4.2 Obtaining our written consent may mean that you will not be required to reinstate the house to its original state, depending on the particular alteration or improvement, during, or at the end of your tenancy.

#### **5. How do I apply for permission?**

5.1 Application forms are available at our office upon request. You should complete the form giving us full details of the work you intend to carry out. We would always suggest that you speak to us informally at first to get our general advice.

5.2 As a minimum you will be required to give us a full written description of the proposed works, including the specification for any materials to be used, and the details of any firms or tradesmen to be employed. We may ask you for copies of any public liability insurances held by any one you employ to do the work. We may ask you for detailed drawings or sketches if the work is structural or complex.

- 5.3 You must not begin works until you have our written permission, and obtained any necessary local authority consents and provided us with the original versions of any such consent.
- 5.4 We will not grant permission retrospectively.
- 5.5 We will either grant or refuse permission within 28 days of receiving your written application. We may refuse permission but invite you to make a fresh application with further detailed information.
- 5.6 If you carry out any works without our prior written consent we are entitled to restore the house to its previous condition during, or at the end of your tenancy and to look to you for our costs.

## **6. Right of appeal**

- 6.1 You can use our appeals process if you disagree with our refusal to grant you permission or for any of the conditions we impose on you.
- 6.2 You should read our leaflet “Internal Appeals Process” for more information about this. Copies are available on request.
- 6.3 In respect of certain alterations and improvements and the right to compensation you will have a statutory right of appeal if you are unhappy with our decision and you have exhausted our internal appeals process. For further information on your statutory right of appeal, please ask for a copy of our policy on “Right to Compensation for Improvements.”

## **7. Other policies**

7.1 You are referred to our policy on “Right to Compensation for Improvements.”

## **8. General**

8.1 If you require any further information with regards to alterations and improvements, please contact our office and our staff will be happy to help.