

## Compensation for home improvements

You may be able to claim back some of the cost of the improvement if you end your tenancy. Compensation is based on the type of improvement, how much it cost, how long it is expected to last and how old it is when you leave.

We do not pay compensation for decorations, carpets or floor covering, or any garden improvements.

We will not pay compensation if you did not seek our permission before the improvements were carried out; you buy your home through the Right to Buy or Right to Acquire scheme or if your home is repossessed. If your tenancy is as a result of succession we may still pay you compensation for your improvements, depending on how long they have been in place.

If you owe us any money or rent at the end of your tenancy we will deduct the money owed from the compensation amount.

Improvements that qualify for compensation	Qualifying lifetime of the improvement
New bath or shower, wash hand basin or toilet	12 years
New kitchen sink and unit	10 years
New storage cupboards (bathroom or kitchen)	10 years
New work surfaces	10 years
Space or water heating	12 years
Thermostatic radiator valves	7 years
Pipe insulation (water tank or cylinder)	10 years
Loft insulation (if the existing is less than 150mm)	20 years
Draft proofing to outside doors and windows	8 years
Double or secondary glazing to outside windows	20 years
Rewiring or fitting extra plug sockets	15 years
Security improvements (not burglar alarms)	10 years

## Noise and hard floor surfaces

Fitting wood or laminate flooring may seem perfectly straight forward but it can seriously affect your neighbours. Removing your carpets could mean that your neighbours have to cope with more noise and, in some cases, their health and well being could be put at risk. This can lead to distress and disputes between neighbours and, if the noise from your wood or laminate flooring is found to be unreasonable, then we can ask you to remove it, and take action against you if you refuse.

You can lower the noise levels by fitting the right underlay, using rugs and wearing soft soled shoes. This may seem excessive, but following this advice should not only reduce noise for your neighbours, but also in your own home. It will also prolong the life of your flooring, which can be very expensive, and help to prevent injury for anyone falling on the hard surface.

If you are thinking of making home improvements, please contact your customer partner as early as possible to discuss what you are proposing.

We will want to carry out regular inspections whilst any work is going on and after it is completed.

# IMPROVING YOUR HOME

What you should know about making home improvements

## CONTACT US

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Note: visitors to our offices are by appointment only

# WE WANT YOU TO MAKE THE MOST OF LIVING IN YOUR HOME. IF YOU DECIDE THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE SOME HOME IMPROVEMENTS, THE FIRST THING YOU MUST DO IS GET OUR PERMISSION.

We will not unreasonably refuse permission or insist on any unreasonable conditions without a good reason. However we do need to ensure that what you have planned is appropriate as sometimes it may not be possible to improve your home. For example, your home could be designed for elderly or disabled residents and your improvements might make it unsuitable for the next resident who lives there if you move on.

If you make improvements without our permission, we may ask you to remove them and you will have to pay for the cost of doing so.

## When you approach us to make improvements, we will ask you to:

- Tell us about the work you plan to do
- Agree a specification and plans for the work with us.
- Get planning permission and building regulations approval from the local council if you need to. (You will have to pay for this).

We suggest you get three estimates or quotes if the works are major (for example, over £5,000 in cost) from suitable established contractors. It is very important that they have the right insurance cover in place whilst the works are undertaken.

## Decorating

Keeping your home in a good, clean decorated condition is your responsibility and is not classed as an improvement for this purpose. This includes your floor coverings.

## Laminate and wood flooring

If you would like to lay laminate or wood flooring, it is classed as a home improvement and you must get our written permission – but it does not qualify for any compensation when you move out as you will be asked to remove it before you leave.

## We will not normally refuse permission, as long as you follow these conditions:

- The flooring is laid professionally and you make sure existing skirting boards stay in place.
- It will be your responsibility to look after the flooring and pay for any maintenance needed.
- If any damage is caused to the flooring by water, leaks, or from the removal of fixtures and fittings, it is your responsibility to replace the damage and you will have to claim from your own household insurance policy. (Please check if your policy covers you for this).
- If we have to carry out maintenance work on the floor, you will be responsible for removing and replacing all or part of the flooring, at your own cost.
- If you end your tenancy, you will have to arrange for the removal of the flooring and replace the original flooring. If you do not, we will recharge you for any re-installment work necessary.

## Depending on the type of work you want to carry out, we will insist that:

- Any work to do with gas is carried out by a Gas Safe registered contractor.
- Any work to do with electrics is carried out by National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC) contractor.

We will carry out an asbestos survey before the work starts.

## If the request to make improvements is approved then you will be asked to agree that:

- You will pay for all the costs involved.
- We can inspect the work when it is finished.
- You will put right anything we find to be unsatisfactory. (You will have to pay for this).
- You will leave the improvements in place if you end your tenancy. If you decide to remove the improvement when you leave, you must reinstate the property as it was, otherwise you will be re-charged.
- You will be responsible for the maintenance and repair of the improvement during your tenancy.
- You will fix any damage to our own fixtures and fittings which is caused while you are making the improvements.

