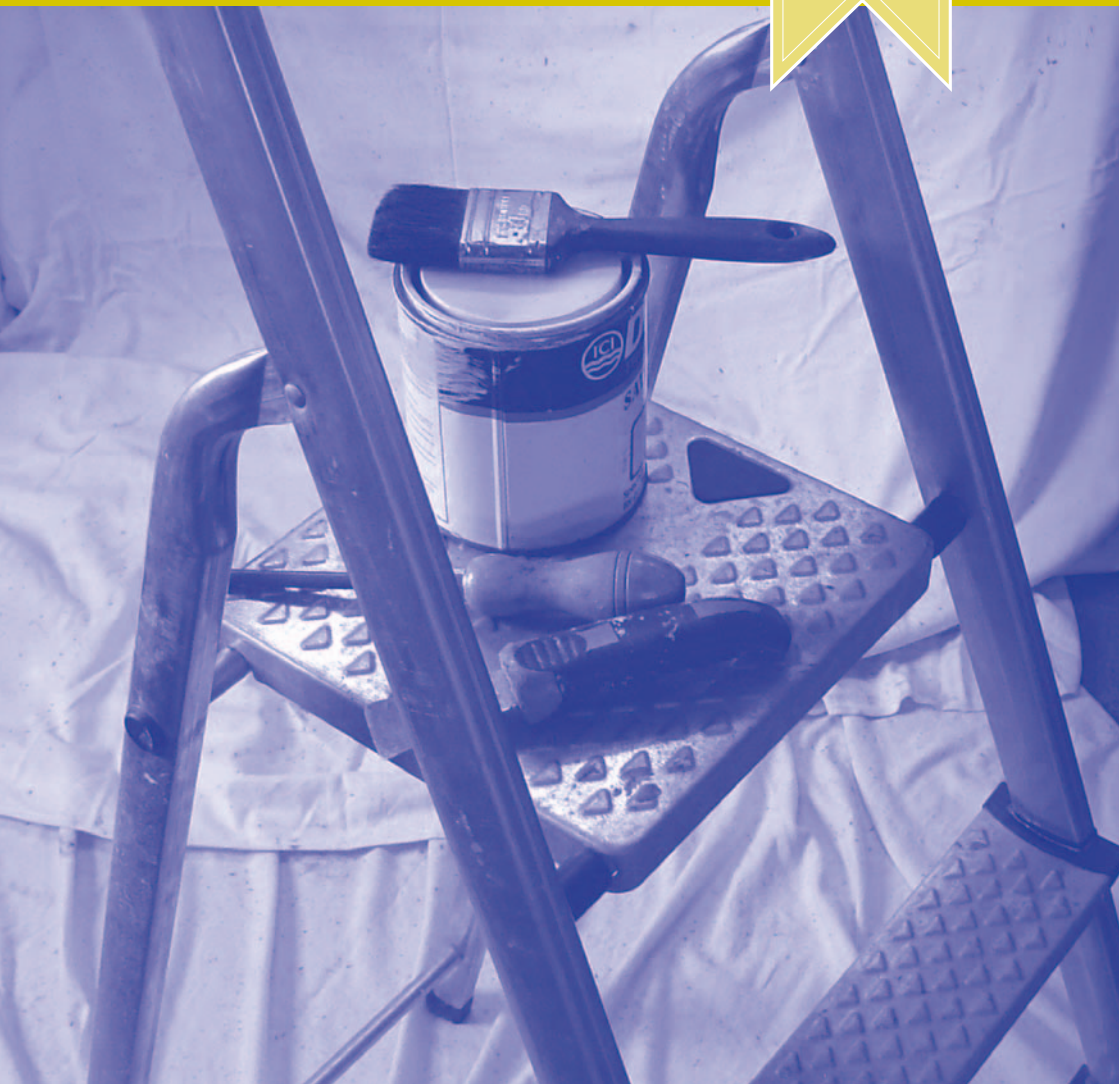


Residents' Alterations and Improvements





Residents' Alterations and Improvements

What is an alteration or improvement?

The Association recognises that you will wish to personalise your home to suit your own tastes and requirements and we are happy to permit certain alterations or improvements providing these are undertaken safely and do not adversely affect the condition of the property.

Any work you wish to undertake in the house, other than simple internal decoration, is classed as an alteration or improvement.

What must I do if I want to carry out an alteration to my home?

You must have **written permission** from the Association before undertaking any works to your home.

We will provide you with an application form which you must complete and return to us, giving the details and timescale of the proposed work. This form must be signed by the tenant(s) and, where work will directly affect your neighbour(s) they must also sign to confirm their agreement to the planned change.

We will assess your application and where the proposed change is acceptable we will issue written permission for the work.

Is there a charge for applying for an alteration?

No, the service is completely free.

Why do I need permission?

The Association has a legal responsibility to ensure its properties are safe, secure and in good condition and this legal responsibility will, in some circumstances, extend to cover alterations undertaken by others.

When will I get a decision?

We will acknowledge receipt of your application within five days and will respond fully with our decision within 28 days. In order to reach our decision we may need to ask you for further information or we may need to inspect your property to assess the likely impact of the proposed alteration.

The timescales may be delayed where, for example, access for an inspection has not been provided or the matter has to be referred to our Board of Directors for consideration. In such circumstances we will always notify you of the reason for the delay and provide you with a new target date for a decision.

Granting permission

Where we grant permission for an alteration you will receive a letter confirming this. The letter will list certain conditions that you must adhere to when carrying out the work, most of which are legal requirements. These are to ensure that the alteration works are completed safely and to an acceptable standard. For example, any electrical alterations must be undertaken by a qualified electrician and you will be required to produce a completed and signed electrical compliance certificate to cover the works carried out.

The letter will also confirm the timescale during which we expect you to complete the works– this is generally 3 months.

What if my circumstances change?

If we have granted permission for an alteration and you either wish to make changes to what you are intending to do or you decide you no longer wish to proceed, then you must notify us as soon as you can. We will assess your proposed changes and clarify any additional requirements that would have to be met.

What must I do once the work is complete?

When you have completed the alteration works you must send us the 'notification of completion of works' form that will have been sent out with your approval letter. (If you lose this form ask us for a replacement) This allows us to inspect the completed alteration (where appropriate) and if it has been carried out in accordance with our conditions we will confirm our approval of the work. If we inspect the work and find that it does not meet our conditions you will be required to undertake additional work to comply, or reinstate to original condition.

You must also send to us any relevant gas or electrical certificates that we have said are required – we will have explained what these are in your letter of permission. If you do not provide these certificates we will instruct you to remove the alteration and restore the property to its original condition.

If you fail to return the 'notification of completion of works' form within the timescale we have given for you to complete the alteration then we will assume you no longer intend to carry out the work and permission will be withdrawn. If you decide to undertake the alteration at a later date then you will be required to re-apply for consent.

What if permission is refused?

We will refuse permission for an alteration or improvement if we believe it would be unsafe or would adversely affect the condition of the property. We will also refuse permission if we have valid objections from your neighbours for the work you are proposing or if it would breach planning or other conditions we have had to meet when constructing the property.

If permission is to be refused we will notify you of this in writing within the timescales given above and will explain the reasons for our refusal.

If you wish to appeal our decision to refuse permission then you may do so, in line with the Association's Complaints Policy.

What if I have already carried out an alteration without permission?

If you have proceeded without permission we will write to you advising that you have carried out an unauthorised alteration and we will require access to your home to fully inspect the work. In certain circumstances we may give you the opportunity to apply for consent retrospectively but you will still be required to meet all of the conditions we set down.

If you fail to apply for retrospective permission or fail to meet the required conditions that have been set down in your retrospective permission letter then we will give you a period of no more than 28 days to remove the alteration and reinstate that part of the property to its original condition. If you fail to comply with this timescale then we may ourselves remove the alteration and restore the property to its original condition. The costs of undertaking this work will be recharged to you.

Who will maintain the alteration?

You are responsible for the maintenance of any alteration or improvement works you have undertaken in your home, for the length of your tenancy.

What happens if I move house?

In the alterations application form you will confirm whether you intend to remove or leave the alteration if you leave the property. In some circumstances we will allow you to remove the alteration, in others it simply isn't practical to do so. Your permission letter will confirm whether you are expected to leave or remove the alteration. Where you are required to remove the alteration you must reinstate that part of the property to its original condition.

Compensation for improvements

You may be eligible for compensation for certain alterations or improvements you have made to your home when you terminate your tenancy. The level of any compensation due is dependent on the initial cost of the works, when they were carried out and the notional lifespan of the alteration or improvement. More information can be found in our 'Right to Compensation for Improvements' leaflet.

Do sharing owners need permission?

Yes, sharing owners do require permission for alterations or improvements. The Association also holds a share in the ownership of your property and we are required to monitor, approve and inspect alteration or improvement works carried out in your home.

Further information

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Tel: 01698 377200 • Fax: 01698 358712
E-mail: assoc@wishawdha.org.uk
Web: www.wishawdha.org.uk



Open: Monday – Thursday: 9.00am – 4.30pm and
Friday: 9.00am – 4.00pm
Closed for lunch: 12.30pm – 1.30pm