

## Guidance notes - alterations to your home

You need our permission if you wish to carry out any improvements or alterations to your home. This includes alterations such as:

- Alterations to kitchens or bathrooms
- Additional/replacement light fittings, switches, sockets
- Installation of showers, cubicles, tiling
- Removal or re-plastering of textured coatings
- Alteration to driveways
- Alteration to doors or windows
- Structural alterations
- Any alterations to heating or electrical installations
- Installation of a shed, greenhouse, garden room or conservatory
- Landscaping works, including decking
- Planting or removal of hedges and trees

You must complete an application form to request our permission to carry out alterations like these.

We may need to arrange for a surveyor to visit you if you intend to carry out any works which require planning permission and/or building regulations, such as

- Structural alterations
- A loft conversion

Permission is not required for works such as

- Replacement of internal doors
- Renewal of TV aerial (unless part of a communal system)
- Replacement floor covering (except tiled flooring) in houses
- Replacement fence panels with like-for-like fencing
- General DIY including decorating
- Fitting of domestic freestanding cookers, washing machines or fridges (where alterations need to be made to accommodate a tumble drier, then an alterations application must be made.)

Where the alteration affects your neighbour(s) (e.g. you are erecting a dividing fence) it is necessary for you to obtain agreement from the tenant/occupier affected.

### **Planning permission**

You may require planning permission and/or building regulation approval. Please contact your local council to check, and if planning permission or building regulations approval is required, you will need to forward a copy of these with the application. Please note that we are unable to provide consent to any alterations without the required building regulations approval or planning permission.

You will be responsible for obtaining planning permission and/or building regulations approval.

### **Age of property**

For new houses, there is a period of one year from the completion of a contract when the contractor is responsible for any defective work identified. Because of this, you may be restricted in the work allowed to be carried out in this first year. Call the Maintenance Department to see if this affects your plans.

If your property is less than 5 years old, you may also need to obtain the original developer's permission before carrying out any structural alterations. You will need to provide us with a copy of this before we can give our permission to any structural works being undertaken.

### **Neighbours**

If you want to carry out works to a fence or on a boundary wall or party wall which is shared with a neighbour, you will need to get their permission first. In some cases you may need a party wall agreement, and you will need to meet the costs of this process. More information can be found on this issue on the following website: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/party-wall-etc-act-1996-guidance>

### **Shared owners**

If you are a shared owner, it is important that you obtain our consent to any improvements/alterations which add value to your property *before* works are carried out. If you decide to buy more shares in the future, any increase in the value of the property due to alterations you have carried out will then be taken into consideration. If you are a shared owner and decide to take out a new mortgage to fund an alteration, our consent to any re-mortgage will be required.

### **Conditions**

You must consider potential hazards such as the disturbance of asbestos or the creation of dead legs in water pipe work before you carry out any work. Please seek further advice *before* carrying out the work.

The entire expense of the alterations/improvements shall be met by you and the work shall be carried out by a competent tradesperson and to the entire satisfaction of Tuntum Housing.

Should you or a contractor appointed by you damage any part of the building fabric whilst undertaking works, you are responsible for the cost of putting this right. We recommend only using contractors who have appropriate indemnity insurance.

Additionally you may be required to remove such alterations/improvements at the end of your tenancy.

### **Gas safety**

If you are installing (or removing) a gas fire or gas central heating, the work must be carried out by a Gas Safe registered contractor who must provide a Gas Safety Certificate for the work carried out. If you do not provide this Certificate, we will carry out the test and will recharge the cost to you.

### **Electrical Safety**

If you are installing (or removing) any electrical appliances, including light fittings and showers, the work must be carried out by a qualified electrician who must supply an Electrical Safety Test Certificate for the work carried out. If you do not provide this Certificate, we will carry out the test and will recharge the cost to you.

### **Aids and Adaptations**

If the alteration is an aid or adaptation to your home for which a Disabled Facilities Grant may be available, we recommend you contact Social Services, your doctor or the Grants officer at your Local Environmental Health Department in the first instance. Our consent will still be required to any structural aid or adaptation.

### **Maintenance**

We may maintain some improvements/alterations you make to your home, but others may remain your responsibility, especially if you have installed non-standard items or items with parts that are difficult to obtain.

We will carry out an annual gas service on a gas heating appliance but any repairs arising will be your responsibility. We may cap an appliance or remove it entirely if it is found to be faulty or in need of repair.

We will tell you whether we will maintain your improvement or alteration, and any other conditions when we give you permission.