

Improvements and alterations

IMPROVEMENTS MADE BY ORIGIN HOUSING

Origin Housing has a number of properties requiring modernisation. This will involve major works to the outside of buildings as well as internal improvements. There are only limited possibilities for us to move tenants out while work is going on. As far as possible, works will be carried out while tenants continue to live in their homes. We will do our best to keep disruption to a minimum. If you suffer excessive disturbance we may be able to pay compensation.

If the work is so extensive that you must move out we will provide suitable alternative accommodation. If you are unable to return to your own home you may be entitled to a Home Loss payment and removal expenses.

If you are likely to be affected by our modernisation programme, we will consult you well in advance of any work. You can also be involved in decisions about the detail of the improvements to your home, including choice of fittings and paint colours.

MAKING YOUR OWN IMPROVEMENTS

You have the right to carry out improvements to your home as long as you have our permission in writing beforehand. An improvement is any alteration or addition to your home. The following would be considered improvements:

- Installing central heating, a gas fire, electric sockets, a shower or bathroom, kitchen units and double-glazing

PERMISSION REQUIRED FOR MAKING IMPROVEMENTS

For major works such as loft conversions or knocking down walls we will require a detailed plan and you will be visited in your home to discuss the works. You will also need planning and building control permission from your local council. Permission may also be needed from the gas, electricity and water companies for other major improvements. It is your responsibility to obtain the necessary permission.

If you wish to carry out an improvement, please contact the Contact Centre on 0800 040 7989. In most cases permission will be given subject to the following conditions:

- That the work is carried out to a satisfactory standard and where necessary the contractor has the correct qualifications e.g. Gas Safe, NICEIC
- That it involves no cost to the Association



- That you take responsibility for keeping the improvement maintained
- That if the improvement involves replacing a previous fixture or fitting originally provided by us, it will become the property of Origin when you leave
- That you repair any damage caused by the removal of your own improvements when you leave (e.g. additional wall cupboards)
- That the Contractor you use has insurance to carry out the work
- That all necessary planning permission and building regulation approval has been obtained from the local Council before starting work.

Sometimes in order to carry out a repair quickly it may be necessary to remove items you have fitted – for example gaining access to pipe work under laminate flooring. Our contractors will make every effort to limit damage necessary to carry out the repair.

When we are able to plan the repair we will give you the choice of arranging, at your expense, for the removal of the fixture or fitting prior to work being started, and for its replacement afterwards.

The Association will not take responsibility for damage caused or for replacement of damaged items.

WE WILL ONLY MAINTAIN SYSTEMS SUCH AS CENTRAL HEATING IF A CONTRACTOR APPROVED BY US PUTS THE SYSTEM IN AND IT ONLY NEEDS NORMAL MAINTENANCE.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I MOVE?

If you move out you must leave the improvements in place or remove them, replace the original fitting and make good the affected area. You may be entitled to claim compensation if you leave them in place when you move out. The sum of money you receive will not necessarily be the amount you paid. We have to take into account the age and the condition of the improvement and we use a formula set down by the Government to work this out. If you did not have our written permission for the work, then we cannot pay compensation.

ADAPTATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

If you, or a member of your family, are disabled we may be able to adapt your home to make daily life easier. The type of aids and adaptation we carry out, if funding allows, include:

- bathrails or a shower
- grabrails, ramps and stairlifts
- wider doorways for wheelchair access

In almost all cases we will need a report from an occupational therapist on the best way to meet your needs.

If you feel that you would benefit from adaptations to your home, please contact the Contact Centre on 0800 040 7989 so that your needs can be assessed. We are able to make some improvements, but resources are limited and we can offer advice about a transfer.