

## Alterations and Improvements

### Policy Summary. 047

#### 1. Introduction

This policy explains what changes you can make to your home and how to get permission.

This applies to:

- General needs housing
- Key worker accommodation
- Partial ownership properties
- Supported housing
- Extra care housing

 **You must get written permission from GHA before starting any work.**

#### Types of Alterations

##### **Structural Alterations (NOT allowed)**

You must not make structural changes to your home.

This includes anything that affects:

- The structure or layout
- The size of the property
- How the property is classified

**!** These are not allowed because they can:

- Affect safety
- Increase costs and insurance risks
- Impact future sales or letting

##### **Non-Structural Alterations (Allowed with permission)**

You can make smaller changes, but only with **written permission from GHA.**

- ✓ GHA will not unreasonably refuse permission
- ✓ Work must be safe and meet regulations
- ✓ The property must not be damaged or reduced in value

## 2. Getting Permission

 You must apply in writing before starting any work.

### Examples of Work That Need Permission




- Electrical work (sockets, fittings)
- Heating systems
- Kitchens – Removing or renewing
- Sheds – Erecting or removing
- Fences or walls
- Gas, water or electrical changes (including outside taps)
- Tree removal
- Garden changes (grass, patio, etc.) Artificial grass will not normally be approved.
- Satellite dishes or aerials

### Flooring in Flats

 Laminate or ceramic flooring is **not allowed** unless you live on the **ground floor**.

### Other Permissions You May Need

Some work may also need:

-  Planning permission
-  Building Control approval
-  Asbestos Survey

✓ You must arrange and pay for these yourself

✓ Only apply after GHA approval


### Costs and Checks

You are responsible for:

- All application fees
- Any increase in insurance (partial owners)
- Asbestos surveys (if required)


GHA accepts no responsibility for damage, injury or loss arising from alteration works carried out by residents or their contractors. Residents are responsible for ensuring adequate insurance cover during works.

### ✓ After the Work Is Finished

 GHA will inspect the work. All work must be completed by suitably qualified contractors where required by law. Electrical, gas and specialist works must be carried out by certified professionals and relevant certificates must be provided to GHA on completion.

✓ If acceptable → signed off

✗ If not → you must fix it

 If you don't fix it, GHA may arrange for the work to be completed and recharge the cost to you.

### 3. When Permission Will Be Refused

GHA may refuse if the work:

- Damages the structure
- Costs GHA money
- Reduces property value or letting ability
- Breaks regulations
- Harms the environment
- Harms Health and Safety
- Creates safety risks
- Affects future accessibility

 Example:

You cannot replace a wet room with a bath.

 You can submit a revised application if refused.


### 4. Future Maintenance

You are responsible for maintaining anything you install.

 GHA will not repair tenant-installed items.

### End of Tenancy or Lease

GHA may require the property to be returned to its original condition.

 If this applies:

- You will be told in writing
- You may need to pay costs upfront

### 5. Compensation for Improvements

Approved alterations may become part of the property and may need to remain in place when the tenancy or lease ends, unless GHA requests removal.

 Partial owners:

The property will be valued as if improvements were not made.

 No extra payment will be made.

## 6. Unauthorised Work

If you carry out work without permission:

 You must apply for retrospective approval with the GHA

 £250 administration fee applies

Partial Ownership: Any unauthorised alterations may delay or affect the resale process when the property is sold. The property may need to be reinstated before resale can proceed.

### Further Action May Be Taken If:

- You refuse to apply
- Permission is refused and you don't put things back
- Work does not meet required standards.


 GHA may:

- Carry out the work
- Charge all costs + £250 fee

## 7. Removal of Improvements

GHA can require removal if:

- Permission was not given
- Work is unsafe
- Damage has been caused



 Costs will be charged to you.

## 8. Replacing a Bath with a Shower

In general needs housing only:

If you have a medical need:

✓ GHA may allow a step-in shower

-  Must be supported by a medical specialist
-  Each case is considered individually

## 9. Review

To be reviewed every 3 years

**Approved:** June 2026

**Review:** June 2028