

Policy Name	Alterations and Improvements Policy
Policy No.	047

1. Introduction

- a) This Policy applies to all tenants living in general needs, key worker, partial ownership, supported and extra care accommodation.
- b) Tenants, licence holders and partial owners are allowed to carry out alterations and improvements to their home if they have gained GHA's written consent before any works are carried out.
- c) As a landlord, it is important that we are aware of any plans for alterations and improvements so we can protect our interest in the property and safeguard it from anything that may de-value it or reduce its letting potential.
- d) GHA will not unreasonably refuse permission for alterations or improvements to be made from a tenant, licence holder or partial owner.

2. Granting Permission

- a) A tenant, licence holder or partial owner who is planning to carry out an alteration or an improvement to their home must request permission from GHA in writing in advance.
- b) Examples of works that would be assessed under this Policy include, but not limited to, the following listed below:
 - Erecting, installing and removing walls, windows, doors and floors;
 - Structural works;
 - Installing or removing electrical sockets/fittings;
 - Installing or removing central heating
 - Removing or renewing kitchen units
 - Erecting or removing garages, shed or outhouses
 - Erecting or removing outside fences or walls
 - Removing or installing gas, electrical or water supplies (including an outside tap)

- Removing or installing a conservatory, extension, porch, or loft conversion
 - Felling a tree
 - Changes to any coverings to the outside area including changing grass to patio or vice versa
 - Satellite dishes and TV aerial
- c) Permission to lay laminate flooring or ceramic flooring in flats will be refused unless it is on the ground floor.
- d) In some cases, an alteration or improvement will require building control permission and/or permission from the Environment Department. If this is the case, the tenant or leaseholder will be responsible for obtaining these permissions before work commences.
- e) The tenant, licence holder and partial owner is responsible for paying all fees or charges that arise from seeking the appropriate permissions.
- f) Partial owners will be required to pay additional insurance costs should GHA's policy increase due to the alterations made.
- g) An asbestos survey may also need to be carried out before any works takes place which the tenant, licence holder or partial owner will be responsible for.
- h) Once the alteration is complete GHA will sign off that the work has been completed to a satisfactory standard. If the work has not been completed to a satisfactory standard GHA will request that the tenant, licence holder or partial owner bring the alteration up to a good standard of workmanship or GHA will carry out this work and re-charge the tenant, licence holder or partial owner for the cost involved.

3. Refusing Permission

- a) GHA will refuse permission where:
- The proposed works are considered to be detrimental to the structure and/or long term maintenance of the property
 - There would be any additional cost to GHA
 - The works may decrease the overall value of the property or decrease its letting ability;
 - The proposal will breach planning, building regulations or any other legislation;

- The environmental impact of the proposal is considered to be detrimental to the surrounding area;
 - The works will impact the health and safety of those living in or visiting the property or block;
 - The property has been specifically designed to assist tenants with mobility issues and the proposed alteration would impact on future tenants' accessibility e.g. If the property has a wet room the GHA will not allow a bath to be installed.
- b) Where permission has been refused, the tenant may submit revised proposals for consideration.

4. Future Maintenance

- a) GHA will not be responsible for maintaining items that have been installed by tenants, licence holders or partial owners.
- b) At the end of the tenancy, licence or ownership the GHA may request for the alteration to be put back to how it was originally. However, if this is the case GHA will confirm this in writing when permission is granted and will require the funds upfront to re-instate the property to how it was before any works were carried out.

5. Surrendering a property back with an approved Alteration or Improvement

- a) At the end of a tenancy or licence GHA will consider all claims for compensation made by a tenant or licence holder who carried out approved alterations or improvements to the property.
- b) At the end of a partial ownership lease the owner has the option to have the property valued with and without the alteration or improvement. If the alteration has added value to the property the partial ownership can choose to sell back at the lower value and GHA pay the difference between the two values. This would mean the partial owner would receive 100% of any value they may have added to the property. Should the partial owner decide to take this option an Instrument of Variation will need to be signed by GHA and the owner at the Partial Owner's cost.

6. Unauthorised Alterations or Improvements

- a) If a tenant, licence holder or partial owner carries out either an alteration or improvement without obtaining written permission GHA may give retrospective permission subject to the tenant, licence holder or partial owner making a written request.
- b) Further action will be taken if:
 - The improvement has already been carried out and the tenant, licence holder or partial owner refuse to make an application
 - Permission is refused and the tenant, licence holder or partial owner does not re-instate the property to its original condition.
 - The quality of the workmanship or materials used is below the required standard

7. Removal of Improvement

- a) GHA reserves the right to reinstate the property to its original condition if permission was not granted, or the alteration is unsafe, or causing damage to the structure of the property, or any adjoining property. Any costs incurred in reinstating the property will be recharged to the tenant, license holder or partial owner.

Approved: April 2020	Review: April 2023
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