

Customer Alteration and Improvement Policy	
Document Owner: Director of Asset & Sustainability	Document No: AM-PL-002
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1.0 Purpose

1.1 Beyond Housing welcomes the importance customers place in making alterations and improvements to their homes and as such will support requests wherever possible. The alterations and improvements covered by this policy are those arranged by the customer in line with the tenancy agreement, the relevant law, and at their own expense. We will provide clear guidance and advice to the customer on how to complete this process. Customers must contact Beyond Housing for approval before making alterations or improvements.

2.0 Scope

2.1 We will:

- Outline our overall approach to customer alterations and improvements.
- Provide detailed guidance on how this approach is implemented.
- Use accessible communication methods and communicate in a structured and timely manner.
- Provide information, including standards and conditions, which must be adhered to when alterations or improvements are carried out.
- Set out customers responsibilities and obligations for building safety, planning standards and ongoing liabilities.

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- Set out what action we will take if customers undertake improvements without first gaining permission from us.
- Provide guidance on what costs customers may re-claim at the end of their tenancies for improvements they have made.

2.2 There are two important areas to be highlighted during application of this policy and supporting procedure, these are linked to the customer journey and our timely response to requests.

- A response to a request that does not require a home visit by a surveyor, where all relevant information has been provided by the customer, should be processed within ten working days by the customer services team.
- Where a response to a request requires a home visit by a surveyor, this will be arranged at a convenient time for the customer within ten working days.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Not applicable to the language or terminology used in this policy.

4.0 Legislative and statutory requirements

4.1 Only minor alteration requests will be considered and approved for properties held on short term tenancies. We reserve the right to use discretion when considering non-minor alterations for properties held on assured (shorthold) tenancies. For customers on assured tenancies, we will accept and process all alteration requests.

4.2 This policy acknowledges and sets out through the supporting procedure the right to re-claim costs for certain customer improvements made to the property at the point when a tenancy ends.

4.3 This policy will be implemented with reference to the following:

- Tenancy Agreement
- Repairs policy.
- Adaptations policy.
- Gas and heating safety management policy.
- Asbestos management policy.

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- Electrical safety policy.
- Fire safety management policy.
- [Improving my home | Beyond Housing](#) – Guidance notes.

4.4 All alterations or improvements will be looked at on a case-by-case basis and given consideration if there is a conceivable benefit to any protected characteristics under the Equalities Act 2010 and measures may include mobility aids or improvements to assist with any disabilities or impairments.

4.5 We will process customer alteration requests in line with this policy and supporting procedures and the information supplied by the customer. Customer alteration requests will not be approved solely on the basis that another customer has made that alteration in the past to another property, whether that alteration was approved by Beyond Housing or not.

5.0 Responsibilities

5.1 The Director of Asset Management & Sustainability has overall responsibility for the effective implementation of this policy and is also responsible for ensuring that colleagues involved in its application fully understand their roles and responsibilities.

5.2 The Director of Customer Services & ICT will be responsible for embedding, implementation and operational delivery of the policy and procedure for non-technical and allowed alterations.

5.3 The Director of Asset Management & Sustainability is responsible for ensuring sufficient resource is available for technical inspections where more information needs to be gathered on the proposed alteration.

5.4 All Beyond Housing colleagues are responsible for identifying and reporting alterations or improvements that are suspected to have been undertaken without permission, are unsafe/unsatisfactory, whether approved or not.

5.5 Customers are responsible for complying with this policy when making alterations or improvements to their homes.

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6.0 Policy detail

- 6.1 Customer alteration requests are received electronically, via the telephone, face to face appointments or in paper format. Application forms are available to download from our website or can be posted out upon request.
- 6.2 The customer service team provide first contact with the customer and respond to the initial application. If the request can be granted without further information the customer will be informed in writing within 10 working days.
- 6.3 If a home visit is required by a surveyor, for technical inspections where more information needs to be gathered on the proposed alteration, the application will be passed to the Asset Planning Team and additional information will be gathered to support the application decision. The application will remain with the Asset Planning Team until a final decision can be made. There may be occasions when Beyond Housing can put customers in touch with our approved contractors who carry out similar work for us. Any contractual relationship will be between the contractor and customer, and this should not be seen as a recommendation by Beyond Housing who will take no responsibility for the performance of the contractor or subsequent payment by the customer.
- 6.4 Successful applications will remain open until the work has been completed, is of a satisfactory standard, and all documentation and certificates have been received.
- 6.5 Once complete, information will be stored on our document management system and customer relationship management system. for further reference.
- 6.6 When a tenancy ends, the customer can apply to re-claim costs for some material improvements they have made to the property. For example cost re-claims for customer kitchen and bathroom installations are subject to age, condition checks and proof that they were professionally fitted. These requests are processed by the customer services team, when required, support from the Asset Planning Team will be provided to assess the condition of the alterations. The final decision and payment are the responsibility of the assurance team.

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- 6.7 Where unapproved customer alterations are identified the customer services team will contact the customer and start the process of gaining retrospective permission. If this cannot be achieved due to the nature of the alteration or there is an immediate danger to the property or customer, the Asset Planning Team or the Health and Safety Team will immediately become involved. If required, emergency repairs may be arranged on behalf of the customer, installations removed, and customers recharged for the costs.
- 6.8 Where a customer raises a complaint about the application of this policy we will deal with this as a customer complaint.
- 6.9 Where customers are not happy with the outcome or decision of an application, it will be handled through an appeals process and will not be eligible for the complains process.
- 6.10 Customers have the right to appeal an outcome or decision once. The appeal will be reviewed by a panel of housing and asset team managers. A final decision will be provided following the decision appeal review.

7.0 Underpinning procedures

- Customer Alterations Procedure.

8.0 Consultation

- 8.1 Consultation on this policy was carried out with the following teams and groups, Customer services team, Housing Operations, Asset Management, Customer Experience Team, Risk and Assurance Team, EDI Group, and Operation and Commercial Teams. Consultation has been carried out with a range of lived experience customers.
- 8.2 Customers and colleagues will have direct access to this policy via the website or mypad.

9.0 Controls and reporting

First line control	Responsible (Job role)	Reported to:
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monthly 10% check on customer service process, letters, use of decision matrix and KPI's	Housing Admin Coordinator	Customer Services Manager

10.0 Approval and revision

10.1 This policy will be subject to a review every three years, or in response to a change in legislation or best practice, whichever happens sooner.

Accountable:	Chief Operations Officer
Responsible:	Director of Asset Management and Sustainability
Approval body:	Senior Leadership Team

Version	Date	Information
1	October 2018	New policy for Beyond Housing
2	March 2022	Policy review
3	May 2025	Policy review

