



PS02	ADOPTED: 27.5.92	REVIEWED: 30.10.96; 6.8.00; 13.5.03; 11.4.06; 26.08.09; 30.09.15, 28.11.18, November 2021
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TENANT ALTERATIONS & IMPROVEMENTS POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This policy describes how we will respond to requests from tenants and sharing owners to carry out alterations or improvements to their homes. To avoid repetition, the term 'tenants' will be used in this policy to refer to both groups.

1.2 Clauses 5.25 to 5.27 of our Tenancy Agreement and Section 6 of the Tenant Handbook detail a tenant's right to apply for permission to carry out an alteration or improvement. They also provide information on the right of a tenant to claim compensation for a 'qualifying improvement'.

Clause 7 in the Occupancy Agreement signed by a sharing owner details their right to apply for permission. A sharing owner cannot claim compensation for a 'qualifying improvement'.

1.3 If a tenant wishes to carry out work in their property they must apply in writing and obtain our permission in writing before starting any work.

2.0 THE SCOTTISH SOCIAL HOUSING CHARTER

The Scottish Government's Social Housing Charter came into force in April 2012. The Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that tenants can expect from social landlords, in terms of the quality and value for money of the services they receive, the standard of their homes, and opportunities for communication and participation in the decisions that affect them.

The relevant standards and outcomes for the Tenant Alteration and Improvement Policy are:

Outcome 1: Equalities

Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that:

Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognized, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

Outcome 2: Communication

Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Outcome 5: Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements

Tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.

Outcome 11: Tenancy Sustainment

Social landlords ensure that:

Tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home; and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

3.0 INFORMATION

- 3.1 We will publish and make readily available clear, comprehensive information about our procedures for applying for permission to carry out an alteration or improvement, and about our standards and conditions relating to specific categories of work.
- 3.2 In accordance with our Equalities policy, this information will be made available in alternative forms and in other languages as required.

4.0 GRANTING OR REFUSING PERMISSION

Granting permission

- 4.1 We will grant permission for an alteration or improvement subject to certain conditions, including:
 - a) all other approvals required, e.g. planning consent or building warrant, must be obtained by the tenant and original copies provided to Prospect before work starts;
 - b) where a building warrant is required, the original copy of the completion certificate must be provided after the work has been inspected by a Building Control officer;
 - c) all works must be carried out to a high standard of workmanship and comply with our standard specification, where relevant;
 - d) any damage caused to Prospect property as a result of the work must be made good at the tenant's expense;
 - e) where appropriate, the alteration or improvement will be regularly maintained to a high standard by the tenant;
 - f) Prospect reserves the right to require the tenant to reinstate the property to its former condition at the end of the tenancy.
- 4.2 Additional conditions or restrictions may be applied to ensure that the works are carried out to the required standard and/or to limit the aesthetic or environmental impact.

Refusing permission

- 4.3 We will refuse permission for an alteration or improvement where:

- a) the proposed works are considered to be detrimental to the structure and/or long term maintenance of the property;
- b) the proposal will breach planning or building regulations;
- c) the likely aesthetic or environmental impact is considered to be detrimental.

4.4 Where permission has been refused the tenant may submit revised proposals at any time.

5.0 TENANTS WHO DO NOT APPLY, OR FAIL TO MEET STANDARDS

5.1 A tenant who does not apply for written permission before carrying out work will be required to do so retrospectively, once this becomes known.

5.2 A tenant who has been refused permission as detailed in para. 4.3 above but who carries out the work anyway will be required to reinstate the property to its original condition at their own cost within a specified timescale, according to our standards and using appropriately qualified contractors.

5.3 A tenant who has been given permission but whose work does not meet our standards or conditions will be required to carry out further work within a specified timescale to meet the necessary standards etc., failing which the tenant will have to reinstate the property to its original condition as specified in para 6.2 above.

5.4 In all of the cases in paras. 5.1 – 5.3, unless there is a serious safety issue – see para. 5.5 below - we will give the tenant a reasonable time within which to comply with our instructions. Failure to do so will may result in us arranging for the work to be carried out, with the tenant being liable for the full costs of reinstating the property, or the costs of correcting any defects or damage resulting from the work.

5.5 In serious cases where we believe the safety and integrity of the structure and/or the health and safety of the tenant, any household members, visitors or members of the public are at risk, we will arrange as a matter of urgency for the required work to be carried out. The tenant may also have to be decanted. The costs of the work and any other associated costs will be charged to the tenant.

5.6 Full details of the action we will take are given in the 'Tenant Alterations & Improvements' procedure.

6.0 COMPLAINTS & APPEALS

6.1 A tenant who is not satisfied with how we have handled their application may submit a complaint in accordance with our Complaints policy and procedure.

6.2 A tenant may appeal against our decision at any stage of the process, as detailed in the 'Tenant Alterations & Improvements' procedure.

7.0 IMPLEMENTATION & REVIEW

7.1 The Property Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented.

- 7.2 The Property Services Manager will ensure that this policy is reviewed at least every three years and that any amendments required are submitted to the Management Committee for approval.

Reviewed by the Management Committee on: 24 November 2021

Next review due by: November 2024

PROSPECT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT RECORD

Title of policy/ practice/ strategy/	Tenant Alterations and Improvements
Department	Property Services
Who is involved in the EQIA?	Neil Munro
Is this new policy or revision to an existing policy?	Revision of existing policy
Date completed	8 November 2021

Screening Summary

Policy Aim

The aim of the Tenant Alterations and Improvements Policy is to ensure a clear understanding of what an alteration and improvement is and considerations to be taken when granting, refusing or dealing with retrospective permission being sought. This policy contributes to the following outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter:

- Equalities
- Communication
- Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements
- Tenancy Sustainment

Who will it affect?

Protected characteristics	Affected by policy
Age	Yes
Disability	Yes
Sex	Yes
Pregnancy and maternity	Yes
Gender Reassignment/Sexual Orientation	Yes
Race/Religion/Belief	Yes

This policy impacts on all of our tenants as it outlines how we will maintain and upgrade our properties and surrounding neighbourhoods. Any changes to the policy will therefore impact on all of our communities.

What might prevent the desired outcomes being achieved?

Failure to consider our tenants and their needs or characteristics.

Stage 1: Framing

Confirm whether EQIA is required

An Equality Impact Assessment is required as the Asset Management and Maintenance Policy impacts on all of our tenants and residents.

Stage 2: Data and evidence gathering, involvement and consultation

Include here the results of your evidence gathering (including framing exercise), including qualitative and quantitative data and the source of that information, whether national statistics, surveys or consultations with relevant equality groups.

Characteristic	Evidence gathered and Strength/quality of evidence	Source	Data gaps identified and action taken
AGE	Tenant Survey information, ARC data, Census data.	Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2019.	The tenant satisfaction survey was a sample survey which gives a snap shot picture. No evidence for factoring owners or shared owners.
DISABILITY	Tenant Survey information, ARC data.	Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2019.	The tenant satisfaction survey was a sample survey which gives a snap shot picture. No evidence for factoring owners or shared owners.
SEX	Tenant Survey information, ARC data.	Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2019.	The tenant satisfaction survey was a sample survey which gives a snap shot picture. No evidence for factoring owners or shared owners.
PREGNANCY AND MATERNITY	None for current tenants or residents.	n/a	
SEXUAL ORIENTATION & GENDER REASSIGNMENT	Tenant Survey information, ARC data.	Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2019.	The tenant satisfaction survey was a sample survey which gives a snap shot picture. No evidence for factoring owners or shared owners.
RACE, RELIGION OR BELIEF	Tenant Survey information, ARC data.	Tenant Satisfaction Survey 2019.	The tenant satisfaction survey was a sample survey which gives a snap shot picture. No evidence for factoring owners or shared owners.

Stage 3: Assessing the impacts and identifying opportunities to promote equality

Having considered the data and evidence you have gathered, this section requires you to consider the potential impacts – negative and positive – that your policy might have on each of the protected characteristics. It is important to remember the duty is also a positive one – that we must explore whether the policy offers the opportunity to promote equality and/or foster good relations.

Do you think that the policy impacts on people because of their age?

Age	Positive	Negative	Reasons for your decision	How will you demonstrate positive and mitigate negative impact
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes		A proportion of our tenants are elderly.	We will offer help and advice with regard to alterations and improvements, if requested
Advancing equality of opportunity	Yes		A proportion of our tenants are elderly.	We will undertake individual tenant visits to further discuss proposed works, if requested.
Promoting good relations	Yes		A proportion of our tenants are elderly.	We will offer help and advice with regard to alterations and improvements, if requested

Do you think that the policy impacts disabled people?

Disability	Positive	Negative	Reasons for your decision	How will you demonstrate positive and mitigate negative impact
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes		42% of our tenants stated they were disabled in our survey, higher than the Edinburgh average of 16%.	We will offer help and advice with regard to alterations and improvements, if requested
Advancing equality of opportunity	Yes		42% of our tenants stated they were disabled in our survey, higher than the Edinburgh average of 16%.	We will undertake individual tenant visits to further explain proposed works, if requested.
Promoting good relations	Yes		42% of our tenants stated they were disabled in our survey, higher than the Edinburgh average of 16%.	We will offer help and advice with regard to alterations and improvements, if requested

Do you think that the policy impacts on men and women in different ways?

Sex	Positive	Negative	Reasons for your decision	How will you demonstrate positive and mitigate negative impact
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	N/A			
Advancing equality of opportunity	N/A			
Promoting good relations	N/A			

Do you think that the policy impacts on women because of pregnancy and maternity?

Pregnancy and Maternity	Positive	Negative	Reasons for your decision	How will you demonstrate positive and mitigate negative impact
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	N/A			
Advancing equality of opportunity	N/A			
Promoting good relations	N/A			

Do you think your policy impacts on transsexual people or on people because of their sexual orientation?

Sexual Orientation/ Gender Reassignment	Positive	Negative	Reasons for your decision	How will you demonstrate positive and mitigate negative impact
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	N/A			
Advancing equality of opportunity	N/A			
Promoting good relations	N/A			

Do you think the policy impacts on people on the grounds of their race, religion or belief?

Race/ Religion/ Belief	Positive	Negative	Reasons for your decision	How will you demonstrate positive and mitigate negative impact
Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes		A well maintained estate contributes to individuals feeling safe in their communities.	Tenant may require a translation service and help and advise with regard to planning and building regulations.
Advancing equality of opportunity				
Promoting good relations				

Stage 4: Decision making and monitoring

Identifying and establishing any required mitigating action

If, following the impact analysis, you think you have identified any unlawful discrimination – direct or indirect - you must consider and set out what action will be undertaken to mitigate the negative impact.

Have positive or negative impacts been identified for any of the equality groups?	No
Is the policy directly or indirectly discriminatory under the Equality Act 2010?	No
If the policy is indirectly discriminatory, how is it justified under the relevant legislation?	N/a
If not justified, what mitigating action will be undertaken?	N/a

Describing how Equality Impact analysis has shaped the policy making process

- ◆ In carrying out this equality impact assessment we decided that no changes need to be made to the policy.
- ◆ There has been no impact on budgets as a result of this assessment.

Monitoring and Review

The policy is reviewed every three years.

Stage 5 - Authorisation of EQIA

Please confirm that:

- ◆ This Equality Impact Assessment has informed the development of this policy:

Yes No

- ◆ Opportunities to promote equality in respect of age, disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race and religion or belief have been considered, i.e.:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
- Removing or minimising any barriers and/or disadvantages;
- Taking steps which assist with promoting equality and meeting people's different needs;
- Encouraging participation (e.g. in public life)
- Fostering good relations, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Yes No

Declaration

I am satisfied with the equality impact assessment that has been undertaken for Tenant Alterations and Improvements Policy.

Name: Neil Munro

Position: Property Services Manager

Authorisation date: 8 November 2021