

Black Country Housing Group

We will not unreasonably stop you from improving your home, but you must get our permission first.

Remember, you will be responsible for all future repairs and maintenance to the improvement you make. Any damage caused by the improvement must be put right at your expense.

If you carry out improvements without our permission, we may ask you to remove them and put the property back to its original condition.

When you leave the property, if we have to remove an improvement to re-let the property, you will be charged for putting it right.

There are a few exceptions when we will not give you permission to carry out an improvement, such as:

- Glued laminate flooring
- Installation of wood burning stove
- Improvements that are restricted by planning and building regulations or the terms of the tenancy or lease agreement

Under no circumstances should you attempt to fit gas appliances or cooker. If you get this wrong it can be fatal. Do not tamper with electrics as this too can prove to be fatal.

Improvements you must have written permission for:

- Any addition or alterations to the internal or external structure of your property and garden. Including new windows and external doors, erecting sheds or other structures
- Alterations relating to:
 - Plumbing,
 - Gas, including fitting gas fires,
 - Electrics and circuits.

If your improvement does not fall into the above criteria you will normally get permission for it, either verbally or in writing. However some permission will be granted with conditions attached that you must comply with.

To discuss your improvement ideas call us on 0121 289 3914 or email housing@bchg.co.uk or visit our website www.bchg.co.uk

The table below gives you a quick overview of improvements you can do with or without permission and the conditions attached that you must stick to. If you're in any doubt always speak to us first.

Type of alteration/ improvement	Do you need Written consent?	Guidelines
Carpets and floor coverings	No	
Laminate flooring	No	Laminate flooring is not permitted in flats. In houses only the click sort can be used, not glued. Tenancy agreement provides further detail.
Bathroom or kitchen alteration/replacement	Yes	You will need to discuss this with us first. Our surveyor will let you know what is required.
Doors (internal)	No	Glazed doors need to be safety glazing that is toughened, laminated or plastic. You cannot remove the kitchen door, these help with fire safety.
Internal redecoration	No	Not permitted within the first 12 months of a new build property.
Walls – any changes to position or structure of internal walls	Yes	You will need to obtain advice from building control and contact us. No work must be started until you have our permission.
Built-in wardrobe / cupboards	No	You should avoid locating the wardrobe on an external wall as this may result in mould.
Water meter	Yes	Your Supplier will need BCHG consent.
Electrics - new fittings/sockets/ lights	Yes	NICEIC certificate is required.
Exterior – security cameras, burglar alarm boxes, key safes, external signage and lighting	Yes	If an external light causes a neighbour nuisance, then we will ask you to adjust it, move it or remove it.
Install a shower	Yes	NICEIC certificate is required. Any mixer shower should be suitable for the type of boiler in your property.
Pipework (including waste pipes)	Yes	If re-routing.
Gas works	Yes	You must speak to us first and have our permission
Doors/ windows – external (new or replace)	Yes	Speak to us first we might want particular style in the locality.
Paint external doors	No	Only timber doors. Fire rated front doors to flats need to be

		painted with fire retardant paint.
TV aerial or satellite dish	No – If a house Yes – If a flat	
Fencing	Yes	Front boundary fencing should be no more than 1 meter in height
Fitting external gates	No	They must match the fencing they are next to. Gates must open inwards, onto the property.
Conservatory	Yes	Might require Planning Permission and building regulations consent

Who do I need to contact for Building Control or Planning Permission?

You will need to contact your local authority.

<p>Sandwell Council Building Control and Planning</p> <p>Email: planning@sandwell.gov.uk</p> <p>Call: 0121 569 4054 or 0121 569 4055.</p> <p>Write to: Sandwell Council House, PO Box 2374, Oldbury, West Midlands, B69 3DE.</p>
<p>Dudley Council Building Control and Planning</p> <p>Email: building.control@dudley.gov.uk</p> <p>Call: 01384 814136</p> <p>Fax: 01384 814126</p> <p>Write to: Building Control, Planning and Economic Development, Directorate of Place, 4 Ednam Road, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 1HL</p>

What costs do I need to pay?

You must pay the full cost of the improvement work.

You will have to pay for any building regulations approval or planning permission.

Conditions required for any improvement works

A gas safe registered engineer must do any gas work. When the work is done, you must get a gas safety registration certificate from the engineer and give us a copy.

A qualified electrical installer, whose work is self-certified under a registration scheme, such as NICEIC or ECA, or an equivalent scheme, must do any electrical work. You must

give us a copy of any regulation and electrical tests and inspection certificate that is needed when the work is finished.

You must keep to any special conditions we ask you to, for example, any health-and-safety regulations.

If there is asbestos in your home, we will tell you about it, along with any health-and-safety regulations you must keep to when doing the work. For example, asbestos may be present in boarding, sheeting, floor tiles, Artex or other textured coatings on walls or ceilings. **The removal of asbestos is at your own cost and you will need to use our licenced contractor.** Please contact us on 0121 289 3914 to discuss.

We may need to visit your home during the work to inspect the improvements.

How do I apply?

Contact us as soon as you can if you have an improvement in mind. Do not purchase anything until you have first contacted us. We will aim to give you our written decision within 14 days. Where we are able to agree permission straight away we will do so verbally, but we will let you know.

You must not start any work until you have received our permission to go ahead.