

**Nuneaton
&
Bedworth**



United to Achieve

Tenants Alterations and Home Improvements

Housing Communities and Economic Development

POLICY MANAGEMENT

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Tenant Alterations and Improvements

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1. Scope of the Policy

- 1.1 This document sets out the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council policy when progressing with tenant, leaseholder or ex Council properties applications received in relation to Tenant Alterations and Home Improvements.

It is the aim of this policy to enable tenants, leaseholder and owner occupiers of ex- council homes to understand what is considered to be an improvement / alteration and, should they wish to carry one out, how they can apply to the Landlord, Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council, to undertake any works.

2. Definition

- 2.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council defines an alteration or improvement to a property as:

- (a) any addition or alteration to the Landlord's standard fixtures and fittings,
- (b) any addition or alteration connected to the services of the property,
- (c) the carrying out of external decoration to the premises.
- (d) any structural alteration to the premises or building/block
- (e) applying for a dropped kerb vehicle access onto the property
- (f) any other adaptation or alteration completed at a property which would require Housing consent to meet with covenants that are noted within a lease agreement or house deed document

3. Eligibility

- 3.1 Introductory tenants are not eligible to apply or undertake any home improvement/alterations in the property.
- 3.2 In some circumstances, the Council may refuse consent for applications or make the consent conditional upon specific actions that may be required to meet with current regulations, compliance or legislation requirements.
- 3.3 Applicants who are in arrears with their rent account, outstanding repair recharges, or have any active court cost account(s) with balances owed to the Council will not be eligible and any application will be refused.

4. Applicant Responsibilities

4.1 Written consent must be obtained for all improvement/alteration to a property from Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council as stated within the following:

- The Tenancy Agreement.
- The Lease agreement
- The House deed documents (relating to ex-council homes)

5. Decisions on Consent

5.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council may not and will not unreasonably withhold consent for application requests to undertake improvements/alterations to the premises.

5.2 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council may however withhold consent for such works by the applicant if it falls into one of the following categories:

- (a) It will make the property, or any other premises, less safe for occupiers,
- (b) It will, or may potentially in the future cause Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council to incur expenditure which it would be unlikely to incur if the improvement/alteration were not made,
- (c) It will reduce the valuation/price which the property would achieve if sold on the open market, or the rent which Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council would be able to charge on letting the property.
- (d) The works intended to be completed by the applicant are not consistent with the Landlords current standard specification of work for the particular property attribute item.

5.3 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council may add conditions to their consent for alterations/improvements, for example where :

- a) Improvements must adhere to current legislation or regulations for example: gas safe, FENSA and electrical 17th edition
- b) Where consent is given, the alteration must be undertaken to meet with the appropriate Council standard specification, for example kitchen installation, window upgrade, fire door upgrade.
- c) Information regarding who will be carrying out the work must be submitted. This is to ensure that the works, where applicable, are being undertaken will be carried out by a competent and registered person or company.
- d) Housing Consent is not Planning Consent – therefore any alterations or adaptation that the applicant wishes to progress will still be subject to the applicant submitting a separate Planning application where applicable.

- e) The applicant will need to ensure the improvement/ alteration complies with the relevant Building Regulations, again if necessary they will have to obtain and apply separately for any relevant Building Control approval.
- 5.4 Consent for alteration/improvement are valid for a period of 6 months from the date of the consent letter being issued. It is then the applicants' responsibility to provide the Council with any requested documentation set out within the conditions of the consent. Failure to provide the documentation to the Council following the works within the six month period will result in the consent being revoked.

6. Refusals

- 6.1 If Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council refuses consent to a request for alteration/improvements it will provide the applicant with a written response giving a full explanation of the reasons for the refusal.

7. Retrospective Consent

- 7.1 Applicants who are applying for retrospective consent following improvement/alterations that they have already completed at their premises may be subject to pay the relevant Housing retrospective permission administration fee. The Council will not progress with any application until the fee has been paid.
- 7.2 If the applicant has carried out improvement/alteration work in the property, which has not been completed by a competent or suitably qualified person, or the works completed are to a poor standard resulting in a potential risk or hazard, then the Council will require the applicant to undertake the necessary remedial works to rectify the issue. If the applicant fails to resolve the problem within the notified timeframe, the Council may carry out the necessary works, or appoint a suitably competent contractor to complete these works. The applicant will be recharged the costs associated for this work, in accordance to the recharging policy.

8. Right to Buy

- 8.1 If an application for a Right to Buy is submitted and alterations /improvements have been completed without obtaining consent, then the retrospective consent process will be progressed. This may result in the tenant paying the relevant fee. The improvement/alteration will require consent to meet with the conditions of the deed or lease agreement.

9. Right to compensation for tenants improvements scheme

- 9.1 In some circumstances, at the end of their tenancy period, tenants may have a right to claim compensation for certain eligible alterations/improvements which they have carried out. Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council will ensure full details of this scheme are provided to tenants who feel they may be eligible and wish to apply, upon request.

- 9.2 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council will then review improvement eligibility and calculated the appropriate amount of compensation based on the qualifying improvement and notional life

10. Equality

- 10.1 This policy and associated procedures will apply to all. Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity and to eliminating unlawful discrimination on the grounds of race, age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, religion, belief, class, financial status and any other difference that can lead to discrimination or unfair treatment fully considering the principles of the Equality Act 2010.

11. Appeals

- 11.1 Applicants who wish to appeal their decision can do so by raising a complaint through the Council's Corporate Customer Feedback process.