

Improvements and Alterations

Information for Leaseholders

If you are planning an alteration or an improvement in your leasehold home, you must notify us, as your landlord, of your intentions. Our decision will depend on the terms of the lease for the property and the extent of the works you plan to undertake. We will need to assess whether permission can be granted under the lease, who permission should be granted by, and if there is a reasonable basis on which the permission should be withheld.

We will get back to you once we've received your application within 5 working days and keep you updated on the next steps. We do not withhold permission unreasonably. If permission is needed from another landlord, it is the leaseholder's responsibility to manage the process and pay for the works.

Information required

We will ask you to provide information on the planned alteration and improvements. This includes details on whether it will affect the structure of the building, if planning permission is required or if the building control team need to be involved. We may also ask for additional information that will help us to make our decision.

Costs

We will charge an administration fee to process your application for alterations and improvements. The fee is non-refundable regardless of the outcome. Speak to your property manager to confirm which fee is relevant for the alterations and improvement works you want to make.

Although circumstances vary, a complex home improvement is likely to affect the structure of the building and therefore needs planning permission and building control approval.

Please be aware that if a surveyor needs to review your application, you may also need to pay their additional fees to assess the application, as well as any subsequent inspection

required. There may also be legal costs and fees involved, dependent on the size and scale of the alterations or improvements you wish to make. For example, if a Deed or Licence is required in respect of the alterations, you will need to pay additional legal costs. All charges are payable in full and are on our schedule of administration fees below.

The below table provides an overview of our fees in relation alteration consent.

Approval for alterations – Initial Fee	£120.00	20%	£144.00
Approval for alterations – (Only applicable where changes are identified as complex)	£50.00 Per hour	20%	£60.00 Per hour
Visit to inspect improvement or alteration, charged per hour £100.00 per hour	£100.00	20%	
Requests for consent or approvals, retrospectively as above, plus a premium of 100%	+100% fees		
Payment of fees can be made by BACS our account details are below			
Reference - This will be your property reference number followed by 'AR' e.g. 123456AR			
Account Name	A2Dominion Housing Group		
Account Number	20621250		
Sort Code	20-47-23		

Additional information for shared owners

When alterations or improvements are carried out, these become fixtures which are then treated as part of the property. They must not be removed if you leave or sell the property. When the property is valued it is important that the works are accounted for. This is crucial for 'staircasing', where the shared owner can buy further shares in the property, or a shared ownership resale, so that the landlord does not benefit from improvements made by the leaseholder.

However, this process is different for each sale and will be assessed by an independent RICS accredited surveyor. In some cases, the value of the works could diminish over time. And in a small number of circumstances, might even devalue a property.

Valuation of home improvement for shared owners

Shared owners should take pictures of the area before any approved works. It is important to keep copies of the cost of materials and other relevant information. This is so you can show a 'valuer', appointed to value your home, what you have done. They will then be able to make an assessment as to whether you have added value to your home. This is especially important when you are buying additional shares in your home, to make sure you are not being charged for any value you have added with your changes.

For the works on your property to be considered as a home improvement when selling or staircasing, the following must apply:

- The building must be at least 5 years old
- Works must have been undertaken by yourself within your property
- Works cannot have altered the buildings common areas or structure

If you sell your home or staircase, the value the works carried out will be assessed by an independent RICS accredited surveyor. Only improvements which we have consented to may be considered. It is also important to remember that the surveyor will assess the amount of value the improvement has added to your home, rather than the amount that it cost to make the improvement. The list below will help you work out if your planned alterations will be considered as a home improvement when you sell or staircase.

Permission for Improvements

Under the terms of most leases, it is necessary to seek permission from the freeholder prior to making improvements. Where A2Dominion is not the freeholder, you must provide us with evidence of consent. Unfortunately, if permission has not been granted for any improvement where necessary, it cannot be considered when redeeming an equity loan, selling the property or buying extra shares during staircasing.

If the improvements are to be considered, you must obtain retrospective consent. Please be aware that obtaining retrospective consent can be a lengthy procedure and should be sought well in advance of commencing a sale or staircasing.

Replacement of Fixtures & Fittings

The replacement of fixtures and fittings like for like will not be considered a home improvement as these are viewed as maintenance and repair of the property.

For example, if your old bathroom suite is replaced like for like with a new one, this is not considered an improvement. However, if something is added that was not previously there, such as a shower or under floor heating, these would be considered an improvement.

Further Information

Only a RICS registered surveyor can determine whether an improvement has added value to a property. Unfortunately, some alterations considered an improvement may NOT add any value to the property.

The below list provides examples of typical improvements which will be considered an improvement when selling or staircasing.

Item of Work	Is this considered an improvement?	Comments
Existing central heating boiler replaced	No	Like for like replacement is not considered to be an improvement
New central heating system installed	Yes	Considered an improvement if no previous central heating existed
Existing kitchen cupboards replaced	No	
Extra cupboards added to the kitchen	No	
Replacement of the whole kitchen	Yes	N.B. Depreciation of value applies
Integrated appliances added to kitchen	No	
Existing tiles in the kitchen replaced	No	
Install new extractor fan or hood in the kitchen	No	
Part of the bathroom suite replaced	No	
Extra wall tiling added to the bathroom	No	
Redecorating your home	No	
Replacing floor coverings (carpets, wooden floors etc)	No	
Replacing double glazed windows	No	
Loft conversion	Yes	If relevant permission and lease variations have been granted
Conservatory	Yes	If relevant permission and lease variations have been granted
Extension to the exterior of the building	Yes	If relevant permission and lease variations have been granted
Replacing non double-glazed windows with double glazed windows	Yes	If carried out by the lessee and not part of cyclical works program

Addition of a garage	Yes	If relevant permission and lease variations have been granted
Complete bathroom refurbishment/ replacement	Yes	N.B. Depreciation of value applies
Internal door replacement	No	
Fitted wardrobes	No	
Existing taps replaced	No	
Adding balcony or patio doors to the garden	Yes	If relevant permission and lease variations have been granted
Adding alarm system/ CCTV	No	
Existing fuse box replaced	No	
Alteration of layout of flat (e.g. removal/ addition of walls)	No	Only in limited circumstances
Sound proofing	No	
Garden Landscaping	No	
Addition of a summer house/ greenhouse or other garden structures	No	
Sheds	No	
Lease extension	No	

N.B. This list is not exhaustive.

Minimum Requirements for Alterations

These are our requirements for works that alter a property. They are in addition to any other regulations or rules that govern or control the type of works permitted or how and by who they should be done by.

Any work undertaken in any property, where A2Dominion has an interest, must comply with our rules and requirements. They must also have all the relevant consents and permissions if needed. These must be granted prior to works starting, together with relevant approval.

Below is guidance on other minimum requirements:

- You must get planning permission if needed.
- Notify the building control department of your local council of any relevant works and comply with their requirements if necessary.
- All works must be carried out by a competent person and/or to a proper professional standard. Some works, such as gas, electrical or asbestos, must be done by a registered tradesman.
- You must consider if your alterations may affect your neighbours and whether it could be a nuisance to them either during or after the works are completed.
- You will be expected to make good any damage to any common part or neighbouring property, as a result of any works, either during or after the works are completed.
- Any contractor you appoint to undertake works must carry appropriate liability insurance.
- If you have a mortgage, you may need to tell your mortgage lender what you are doing.

You must send us copies of:

- Consent and the conditions of that consent from any superior landlord.
- Local authority planning permission and/or local building control requirements and conditions.
- Completions certificates or other certificates to show that works have been done by registered contractors as required.

- A letter to confirm that you have completed the proposed alterations and that you have complied with all requirements.

Any consent we grant for alterations are conditional on these minimum requirements being fully complied with. This is in addition to any other specific requirements we superior landlord or other interested party set out. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in us withdrawing our consent. You could be asked to reinstate the property to its former state and condition. If we withdraw our consent and you will be breach of your lease. This could result charges being made to you until the breach is remedied. Being in breach of your lease can also result in the loss of your home. It is very important that you comply with these conditions. If you are unclear about anything at any point of the process, please get in touch with us. It is your responsibility to make sure all the requirements are met.

This note is for guidance only and not a substitute for you taking advice from properly qualified professional.

Code of Conduct

Once permission has been granted, all leaseholders undertaking alterations/improvements, should:

- Give reasonable notice to neighbours before the works start to let them know about possible noise or disruption.
- Before the works start, notify our team if they will impact on fire safety equipment in the building (e.g., deactivate / reactivate smoke alarm systems as they could be linked to a communal system).
- Make suitable arrangements for the storage of items within the demise. No items may be stored or kept in the communal areas of the building.
- Dispose of debris and rubbish responsibly and safely. Do not use communal refuse facilities to dispose of rubbish generated by the works.
- Keep all the communal areas clean and tidy throughout the works.
- Notify our team of any delays or problems affecting the progression of works or any damage arising which could impact on fixtures and fittings, the building structure or a neighbouring property.
- Ensure work are carried out between the hours of 8.00am – 6.00pm Monday to Friday and from 8.00am – 1.00pm on Saturday. Where times are not otherwise specified in the lease).
- Notify us if the works deviate from the approved plans or if a different contractor is appointed.

N.B. It is very important that you consider the impact any alterations may have on your neighbours. Being granted consent to make changes does not preclude you from having to comply with all other lease obligations.

For example, if you obtain consent to install a power shower and that results in a noise nuisance to your neighbours, we will ask you to ensure that this is addressed. This may mean having to make further changes to the installation or removing it totally. It will be your responsibility to make sure that your changes do not cause a nuisance or impact on your neighbours in any other negative way.

IMPROVEMENTS & ALTERATIONS REQUEST FORM

Name	
Property reference	
Address	
Description of works to be undertaken, drawings/ sketches and expected duration	
Contractor to be appointed (any relevant accreditations and qualifications need to be included in order to obtain approval, e.g. NICEIC approved electricians for Electrical works, Gas Safe Engineers for Gas works, HSE registered contractors for Asbestos works)	
Relevant insurance certificates for all contractors involved	(Please attach relevant documents)

<p>including Public Liability Building</p> <p>(a simple proof of insurance is not sufficient -We require the full summary of the cover and the statement of facts)</p>	
<p>Full, detailed method statement and risk assessment for the proposed works on the contractor's letter head</p> <p>(A walkthrough of the job including methods, tools, timeframes and safety methods, e.g. works at height will need safety method safety)</p>	
<p>Specifications of any new fittings</p>	

<p>Building Regulations & Planning Permission (This section is ONLY applicable where planning permission is required)</p> <p>N.B. You will need to provide proof that permission has been given before we can provide our consent – (emails are sufficient)</p> <p>N.B. If you have answered A or B we will not provide our consent.</p>	<p>(a) I have not contacted the Building Regulations or Planning Dept</p> <p>(b) I have applied for Building Regulation Approval / Planning Permission and await their response</p> <p>(c) I have received Building Regulation Approval/ Planning Permission for the intended works</p> <p>(d) The Planning Dept have confirmed I do not require Building regulations approval or planning permission</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Superior Landlord/ Freeholders Permission (This section is ONLY applicable if there is a Superior Landlord & A2Dominion is NOT the freeholder)</p> <p>N.B. You will need to provide proof that permission has been given before we can provide our consent – (emails are sufficient)</p> <p>N.B. If you have answered A, B or C we will not provide our consent.</p>	<p>(a) I have not contacted the Superior Landlord/ Freeholder</p> <p>(b) I have contacted the Superior Landlord / Freeholder for approval and await their response</p> <p>(c) The Freeholder has withheld their permission for this improvement & alteration to be made.</p> <p>(d) I have received the Superior Landlord's/ Freeholder's permission</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Engineer's Calculations</p> <p>(To be provided only if the work includes any structural works)</p>		
<p>Details of your home</p>		

Describe the size and type of property (e.g. 3rd Floor, 2 bed flat)

No. of people living in your home

Do you have a garden? If yes is it shared with your neighbour(s)?

Do you have a shared entrance?

Signature..... Date.....

N.B for this form to be processed the administration fee required must be paid

Once completed please send your form to leasehold@a2dominion.co.uk or post to 113 Uxbridge Road, Ealing, W5 5TL.