

Improving & Modernising Your Home





Tenants have the right to improve their homes, once the appropriate permission has been given. The improvements must be to Erimus Housing standards and must not affect the ability for us to re-let your home if you move.

You may even be able to claim money back for the work you have done if you leave your property.

We want to ensure you understand how to gain permission to carry out any improvements, when you can claim for any changes and the types of improvements you can make.

Do I need permission to redecorate?

No, you do not need permission to redecorate the inside of your home but we do not allow artexing to walls or fixing polystyrene tiling to your ceilings.

Do I need permission to make improvements?

Yes. Before you start any work, please contact your local area office for written permission. This means we can also give you good advice about the work you are planning to carry out as some jobs can damage your home if they are not done properly. Permission is also essential in case you want to claim compensation for any improvement work if you leave your home. It also means we will not charge you to put the property back to our standards when you leave.

Please be aware that if you carry out work that does not meet our standards, we may ask you to carry out the necessary repairs or recharge you the cost of correcting any damage.



What improvements am I allowed to make to my home?

Once you have gained written permission, you can make the following improvements:

- New windows
- New driveway
- Painting the outside woodwork of your property
- Putting in new sockets and light fittings
- New heating system
- New front door
- New bathroom
- New shed or greenhouse

I am thinking of putting laminate flooring throughout the house. Is this okay?

Yes but please be aware that in certain circumstances we will need to lift floorboards to repair or improve the property. In these circumstances, we will ask you to lift the flooring to give us access and you will not be entitled to claim compensation to refit or replace the flooring. Please ask us if you are unsure.

How do I apply for permission?

Simply complete a 'request for alteration' form, which is available from your local housing office or ask us for help to do this. A member of staff may also want to visit you at home to give you advice about the work and talk about your plans in more detail.

What happens when permission is given?

Please read the letter carefully as there may be certain conditions such as using particular materials, following building regulations or ensuring you use qualified people to carry out the work.

Please let your local housing office know as soon as you have finished the work and we will speak to you to arrange an inspection of the work. If any further work is needed, you will be asked to complete it and we will arrange another visit once it is finished.

Can you refuse me permission to carry out my own improvements?

Yes. It may be the case that the proposed work cannot be carried out because it will damage the property, make it unsafe or cause it to drop in value. If this is the case, we will give you a full explanation.

If you are unhappy with the reasons why we have refused permission, you can ask us to look at your case again and a member of staff who was not involved in the original decision will look into it within 21 days.

If you carry out improvements without permission, please be aware you may be charged to put the property back to a suitable condition.

Who is responsible for the upkeep of my improvements in the future?

Once they are completed, the improvements will become part of the fixtures of the property and should not be removed when you leave.

If the work has been carried out properly and it is something we would have been responsible for, such as kitchen or bath fitting, we will carry out repairs required within our legal responsibilities.

In certain circumstances, we may carry out the repair but there will be a charge. If this is the case, we will fully explain it to you.

Will I get compensation if I end my tenancy?

Yes but only if you are leaving the property. If you are buying your home, improvements are not included in the purchase price.

How do I apply for compensation?

When you hand in your notice to leave your property, you should also advise the housing office that you wish to claim compensation for the work you have completed. Please note not all work is eligible. However you will still have 14 days to make a claim once your tenancy ends.

To claim, please write to us and include all the possible information to help us look into your claim

and make a decision on whether you will qualify for compensation.

At this point, please supply your name and address, the improvements made and the cost, with receipts if possible, the dates the work started and finished and any proof of any planning permission you were granted.

Please be aware you cannot claim for professional fees, your own labour and the cost of planning permission or consent under building regulations.



How would my compensation be worked out?

The compensation would depend on how long you had the benefit of the improvement and how long it would continue to benefit the property as the value of any improvement reduces as it gets older.

The value of the improvement would be based on the actual cost or the amount we would have spent on an equivalent improvement, whichever is the lower amount. We would also look at how long the improvement should last, in line with our own improvement programme.

The maximum amount of compensation for any one improvement is £3,000 but there is no limit to the number of improvements you can claim for. Please remember that not all improvements are eligible for compensation.

MODERNISATION

Do you modernise my home?

Erimus Housing is modernising thousands of homes across Middlesbrough in order to hit the Government's Decent Homes Standard target by 2010.

What type of improvements are carried out during modernisation work?

Modernisation work **could** involve the following:

- Installation of a new kitchen
- Replacement bathroom suite
- Electrical rewire
- New external doors
- New double glazed windows
- Replacement heating boiler
- External property repairs

What improvements will be carried out to MY home?

This depends on the findings of a survey carried out by an Erimus Housing inspector who will assess the age and condition of your home's fixtures and fittings. Where they are required, new fittings will be installed as part of the modernisation work. Internal and external property repairs may be carried out too.

How will I be consulted about these improvements to my home?

Together with your contractor, we will consult with you through:

- Modernisation open day - your chance to meet the contractor's staff and find out more about the upcoming work
- Tenants' choice day - you will be invited to view and select the colour and finish choices to personalise your home
- A 'one to one' visit by the contractor's liaison staff who will explain the works in greater detail and assess your individual needs and how you can cope with the work
- On-site liaison by the contractor as your home's modernisation work is proceeding
- Finally, following the completion of your home's modernisation, we will consult with you further to find out your views on the improvements to your home

When will modernisation work to my home and estate begin?

Please contact us for a list that shows the start and finish dates for major housing estates from April 2007 to 2010. If your home is in one of these estates or multi-storey blocks, your own home's modernisation will take place between these two dates. At the contractor's open day nearer the time, you will be given a more accurate date with plenty of time for you to prepare.

Are all Erimus Housing homes to be modernised?

Not all homes will be modernised. This is due to three main reasons:

- Some homes already comply with the Government's Decent Homes Standard and do not need modernising before 2010
- Many homes have already been modernised and your home may be one of them
- Some homes are in a category called 'option appraisal' which means further study of the homes is required before any commitment to modernisation work is made

Contacts

For more information, please contact us on 01642 773600 or log on to our website at www.erimushousing.co.uk



Colour coded information leaflets are available for the following services:



CUSTOMER SERVICE

HOUSING MANAGEMENT

SUPPORT SERVICES

REGENERATION

MANAGING YOUR MONEY

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

We will make this information available in other languages, braille, large print or other formats on request.

Arabic

سوف نحاول توفير هذه المعلومات بلغات أخرى أو بلغة بريل أو بخط كبير أو بصيغ أخرى بناءً على طلبك.

Chinese

我们将会尽力以多种形式提供本信内容，包括其他语言、盲文、大字体或所需的其他格式。

Hindi

विषय आने पर हम यह जानकारी अन्य भाषाओं, ब्रेल, बड़े अक्षरों तथा अन्य रूपों में भी उपलब्ध करवाने की कोशिश करेंगे।

Punjabi

ਬੇਨਤੀ ਆਉਣ ਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੂਜੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ, ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਅਤੇ ਹੋਰ ਦੂਜੇ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਭਿਜਵਾਉਣ ਦੀ ਕੋਸ਼ਿਸ਼ ਕਰਾਂਗੇ।

Urdu

درخواست کرنے پر ہم اس معلومات کو دیگر زبانوں، بریل، بڑے حروف میں یا دیگر شکلوں میں دستیاب کرنے کی کوشش کریں گے۔



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business for neighbourhoods

