

Tenant Alteration Policy Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Where/ how do I ask for permission?

You can either email us at tenant.alterations@cbhomes.org.uk or write to us at the following address:-
Rowan House, 33 Sheepen Road, Colchester, CO3 3WG.

If that is not an option for you please contact us on 01206 282514

Q. How do I know if I am a secure tenant?

Normally, a secure tenant will be someone who has lived in their home for a year or more.

Q. I am a leaseholder, do I need to ask for permission?

We will need an application for permission for any alterations to your property. I understand this is your home but certain requests may need consideration in relation to impact on your neighbours and the safety of the building as a whole.

You can either email us at tenant.alterations@cbhomes.org.uk or write to us at the following address:-
Rowan House, 33 Sheepen Road, Colchester, CO3 3WG.

If that is not an option for you please contact us on 01206 506023.

Q. I am an introductory tenant, why can I not alter my home?

As a secure tenant you will have the right to make alterations to your home with permission. Until your tenancy is secure we ask that you only decorate your home and do not alter your home.

Once you have successfully completed your introductory period we will be happy to receive any request for an alteration from you.

Q. Why have I been refused permission?

There are several reasons why an alteration may be refused and we would write to you with our decisions and reasons why. I

Q. Why do I need building control permission?

Some building works will require building control approval to comply with building regulations and planning law. You can find more information on this on the Colchester Council's website or by dialling 01206 282222.

If you do find you need permission you need to have it in place so it can be sent to us as part of your application for an alteration.

Q. Why won't you repair my alteration?

It is your responsibility to repair and/or maintain any authorised alteration. I appreciate that you will incur a financial cost to repair/replace your alteration but CBH may compensate you for improving your home, should you decide to move in the future.

Q. I can't reinstate the original fixings what will happen?

If you are unable to reinstate the alteration to its original condition CBH will undertake to carry out the work for you. We will ask that you pay for this work to be completed but this could be offset by any compensation you receive for alterations you have completed with permission.

Q. Why does an inspection need to take place?

We want to make sure that an agreement is made on the proposed works. The works need to be carried out to the correct standard, to ensure the integrity of the building but more importantly the safety of your household.

Q. You have refused my alteration request and I am not happy?

You can appeal the decision and can do so by writing to the Head of Asset Management.

Q. How do I to appeal?

You may appeal to the Head of Asset Management and can do so by writing to us.

Q. Why do I have to ask for permission when I have the right under my tenancy agreement?

You need to ask permission as we need to be aware of changes in our properties. We also need to make sure that you are aware of any impacts this may have on your tenancy. As a housing provider we must make sure your property is safe and any alterations are adhering to planning and building control.

Authorised alterations are a big responsibility when looking after your home in the future. The application process helps us both to be aware of all of the changes and what our responsibilities are once they have been completed.

Q. If I am granted planning/building permission am I guaranteed permission from CBH?

Planning permission does not mean that you are guaranteed permission from CBH to carry out the alteration. There may be a reason why your application could be denied which would be told to you in the decision letter.

Q. I don't have a log burner but I have an open fire what do I do?

We would have some concerns regarding the safety of you and your neighbours in relation to an open fire. Please contact us on 01206 506023 to arrange an inspection and we can then advise you further of any potential actions needed.

Q. Alterations have been done to my property prior to me moving in, do I have to remove them if I finish my tenancy even though I didn't put them in?

If you have taken over the tenancy through a mutual exchange then yes, these alterations have now become yours. We would expect you to put it back to its original condition when you choose to end your tenancy with us.

Q. How much would I be charged for an unauthorised alterations inspection?

If you are charged for the inspection, the price would reflect what service would need to attend. The cost in general would be between £35 and £50.

Q. Why was I charged for an unauthorised alterations inspection when my neighbour wasn't?

There are many reasons why this may have happened. Please contact us on 01206 506023 so that we can look into this.

Q. Can I do the work myself even though I am not professionally qualified but able to conduct the work?

We would only accept works done by professionally qualified persons and ask you to follow the instructions set out in the permission letter if you have already made your application. This is to ensure the safety of you and our other residents.

Q. I have improved the property, will I receive compensation once I leave the property?

In some instances this is true and is a legal requirement. If you are ending your tenancy please ask us to undertake an inspection to assess this.

Q. Can you provide me with some contacts for builders to undertake these works?

Colchester Borough homes does not endorse any external companies so you would need to source these yourself. We would advise you to seek at least 3 quotes and references from different companies before making a commitment.

Q. If I provide the materials will you provide the labour?

Colchester Borough Homes does not have the capacity to undertake additional works you may require as part of an approved alteration. You would be responsible for finding competent and qualified contractors to complete your alteration and the full cost of the alteration must be taken on by yourself after permission has been granted.

Q. Why was I charged at the end of my tenancy for an alteration?

As a housing provider Colchester Borough Homes have many safety standards that must be adhered to. We ask for all tenants who make alterations to their property to get permission and adhere to the specifications outlined in the Tenant Alterations Policy. If you make alterations to your property without permission and then choose to end your tenancy these changes will be highlighted when you move out. If we have to undertake additional work or 'make safe' we will pass that cost back to you.

Q. What is retrospective permission?

Retrospective permission is permission for an alteration of your property that has already happened. We will ask for information about the alteration which may include pictures or associated safety documents. We may feel we need to inspect the alteration and so will ask to visit your property. If we need to visit you to inspect the safety and workmanship of an alteration after it has happened you may be charged.

You can ask for retrospective permission by emailing us at tenant.alterations@cbhomes.org.uk or writing to us at the following address:- Rowan House, 33 Sheepen Road, Colchester, CO3 3WG. Send as

much detail about the proposed changes as possible and we will let you know if it has been granted within 28 days.