



Fact Sheet

A guide for tenants own improvements

Improving your home

If you are a secure tenant of the Council you have the right to make some types of home improvement and alterations at your own expense. You need to get written agreement from St. Leger Homes before starting any work.

You will need permission for:

- Erecting satellite dish and TV aerials
- Erecting CB receivers/transmitters
- Installation of kitchen units and accessories
- Installation of bathroom suites and accessories
- Installing central heating
- Any electrical installations
- Erecting a garage, carport, conservatory, shed or greenhouse
- Any structural alterations such as removing walls
- Installing double glazing
- Installing of hardstanding, double gates and dropped kerb
- Replacement of internal or external doors
- Installation of a water meter
- External painting of the property
- Parking a caravan on the property
- Erecting a pigeon loft in your garden
- Any work which needs planning permission or building control approval

Help for people with disabilities

If you or a member of your household has a disability you can apply to the Council for an assessment to see if your home can be adapted to make it easier for you to manage.

The Council's Adaptations Section may be able to help with things such as fitting grab rails, stair lifts, hoists, lever taps, fitting showers over baths, and walk in showers.

Before any adaptations can be carried out to your property an Occupational Therapist will visit you to assess your needs, please contact the teams below to arrange your assessment:

Information can be made available in other languages, or other formats such as Braille or Audio Tape, on request. Please ask a member of our staff for more information, or if you need any other help or advice. They can arrange to speak to you in your own language if you need them to.

Adult Contact Team 01302 737391
Children's Disability and Health Team on 01302 737777

Getting permission

Before you start work you will need to obtain our permission. You can apply by completing the form at the back of this leaflet and returning it to any local St. Leger office. Further advice can also be obtained from our Business Development Team's surveyors on 01302 862761 and 01302 862766.

St. Leger Homes will not unreasonably refuse permission; we will only refuse permission for the following reasons:

- The work would reduce the value of the property
- The work would make the property unsafe
- You are removing amenities within the property that we have provided to make the property suitable for occupants with specific needs

Before you are given permission, we will send you a list of conditions for carrying out the work.

Planning permission

Some types of improvement will also need planning permission for example garages, extensions, conservatories and satellite dishes. If planning permission is required you will have to make a separate application and pay a fee. If you are not sure if planning permission is required you can get advice from the Council's Planning Service Team on 01302 734876 or e-mail planning.services@doncaster.gov.uk

Building control approval

Some improvements may also need building control approval, whether planning permission is required or not. This is to ensure good construction standards and you will have to make a separate application and pay a fee.

Please speak to the Council's Building Control Section on 01302 734848 or e-mail: building.control@doncaster.gov.uk for further advice.

Using a competent contractor

Any work you undertake will be carried out at your own risk. Make sure you use a qualified and competent contractor who has adequate insurance. You will be expected to put right any work that has not been done properly or without permission. You may also be charged if the work causes damage to the property or is left unfinished or if the standard of work is not to our satisfaction.

Asbestos

Asbestos is a name given to a group of naturally occurring materials. Due to its strength and fire resistance, asbestos was widely used in a range of building materials between 1930 and mid 1980s. If your home was built or refurbished during this period it may contain some form of asbestos materials. Asbestos is not a risk if it is in good condition and not disturbed. When asbestos becomes damaged by drilling, sawing or sanding it can release fibres into the air which can be harmful.

A few examples of asbestos materials: bath panels, corrugated sheeting on sheds and garages, soffit boards, guttering and downpipes, pipe boxing, floor tiles and textured coatings e.g. artex.

If your improvements are going to involve any invasive works to the property (this includes chopping out walls, replastering or structural alterations) the Business Development Team Surveyor will check our asbestos register before you start work to check for the presence of asbestos in the property. If no survey is available then St. Leger Homes will arrange for an asbestos survey to be carried out on your home free of charge. If asbestos is found and may be disturbed during the improvements your contractor must be provided with the asbestos survey

and ensure the work is carried out within Health and Safety Executive Guidelines (HSE) and the control of Asbestos Regulations 2006. If HSE Guidelines are not followed and your home is contaminated with asbestos fibres during the improvement works you will be recharged for decontamination of the property. Further information can be found in the leaflet Asbestos Containing Products in the Home (this leaflet is now called Asbestos in the Home) that is produced by St. Leger Homes.

You can get more information on asbestos from the Health and Safety Executive website at www.hse.gov.uk/asbestos

The Business Development Team's surveyors, on 01302 862761 and 01302 862766, will also be able to give you initial advice.

When the work is finished

When you have completed the work please return the postcard included with your application. A surveyor will call out to inspect the work and give you final permission for the installation or alteration. If you have installed any gas appliances they will also arrange for these to go on an annual servicing agreement.

Please remember that St. Leger Homes will take no responsibility for the replacement or renewal of the installation if it is uneconomical to repair or if parts are no longer available, full replacement costs will be your responsibility.

When you leave your home

When you give up your tenancy you must leave behind anything you have installed or fitted. If you want to take something, which is moveable, you must restore things back to how they were before at your own expense. If you have fitted items without permission these may be removed on termination of the tenancy and the cost of restoring these back to original or carrying out remedial works to make them acceptable will be recharged to yourself.

What can I get compensation for?

The Right to Compensation applies to the following improvements if they were started on or after 1 April 1994:

- New bath, shower, wash basin or toilet
- Kitchen units, sinks and work surfaces
- Storage cupboards in bathroom or kitchen
- Central heating, hot water boiler and other types of heating including thermostatic radiator valves
- Insulation to pipes, water tanks, cylinders and loft and cavity walls
- Draught proofing or secondary double glazing
- Rewiring or the provision of lighting or power outlets and fittings
- Security measures (excluding burglar alarms)

You can claim compensation for the cost of materials (but not appliances such as cookers and fridges) and labour costs (but not your own labour).

How do I make a claim?

You should make a claim for compensation in writing to the Empty Homes Team, St. Leger Homes of Doncaster, St. Leger Court, White Rose Way, Doncaster DN4 5ND or phone 01709 860347.

When you give notice to leave your tenancy you will have up to 14 days after your tenancy ends to make a claim. You must provide us with the following details to enable us to process your claim:

- Your name and address
- What improvement you have made

- How much each improvement cost (invoices must be provided)
- The date the improvements began and finished

How is my claim worked out?

If you are entitled to compensation we will work out the amount by following government guidelines. This is based on the expected life of the improvement, the cost and actual age.

- We will look at the cost of the improvements and can take off any grants that you received towards the work.
- The value of the improvement will go down the older it gets as you get more use out of it.
- We can also reduce the amount you receive if we think the improvement cost too much or is a higher quality than we would have provided ourselves.
- We can also deduct any money you owe from the compensation you would get e.g. if you have got rent arrears or sundry debtor accounts outstanding.

If you make a false claim (for example if you claim for an improvement you haven't actually made or you claim for more than the real amount), we can take you to court.

Can I appeal if I do not agree with the decision?

You can ask St. Leger Homes to reconsider its decision. We have our own procedure for dealing with complaints. You also have the right to seek further advice from a solicitor or the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Please make your complaint to the Customer Care Team on 01302 862726 or alternatively email SLHDcomplaints@stlegerhomes.co.uk or write to:

St. Leger Homes of Doncaster
 St. Leger Court
 White Rose Way
 Doncaster
 DN4 5ND



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St. Leger Homes of Doncaster

APPLICATION FOR TENANTS OWN IMPROVEMENTS AND ALTERATIONS

Name	
Address	
Postcode	
Telephone Number	

I would like permission to carry out the following to my home

EXTERNAL

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Carry out structural alterations/extensions | <input type="checkbox"/> Construct aviary |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct hardstanding/double gates | <input type="checkbox"/> Erect - pigeon loft in garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install dropped kerb | <input type="checkbox"/> Park caravan on garden |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct - garage on property | <input type="checkbox"/> Carry out external painting/redecoration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct - carport | <input type="checkbox"/> Replace exterior doors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct - garage on garage site | <input type="checkbox"/> Erect - satellite dish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct - garden shed | <input type="checkbox"/> Erect - TV aerial |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct - divisional fence | <input type="checkbox"/> Erect - CB receivers/transmitters |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Construct - greenhouse | <input type="checkbox"/> Install double-glazing |

INTERNAL

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - gas central heating | <input type="checkbox"/> Install - bathroom suite & accessories |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install additional radiators | <input type="checkbox"/> Install - sink unit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - gas fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Install - kitchen units |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - electric fire | <input type="checkbox"/> Replace internal doors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - balanced flue heater | <input type="checkbox"/> Install - feature/stone fireplace |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - shower unit | <input type="checkbox"/> Install cavity wall insulation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - extractor fan | <input type="checkbox"/> Install - water meter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - additional socket outlets | <input type="checkbox"/> Install - telephone |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - immersion heater | <input type="checkbox"/> Remove cupboards |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Install - automatic washing machine | <input type="checkbox"/> Other please specify: |

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Signature _____ Date _____

Please return this form to St. Leger Homes of Doncaster Ltd, St. Leger Court, White Rose Way, Doncaster, DN4 5ND. Or any local St. Leger Homes office for the attention of the Business Development Team Surveyors (Adwick Depot)