



Making changes to your property

Information for council leaseholders

All leaseholders can redecorate the inside of their property and replace the fittings within the property, but alterations cannot be carried out without our permission.

This leaflet tells you:

- What improvements you can carry out on your home
- What it covers

Can I carry out improvements and alterations to my home?

You can redecorate the inside of your property and replace the fittings within your property. **You must not** carry out any structural work or alterations without first getting our formal written permission.

For example, you will need permission to do the following:

- Change your front door – to make sure it meets fire regulations.
- Remove walls – to make sure that the wall you want to remove is not load-bearing. (It is your responsibility to obtain a structural survey of the wall you want to remove. You should send this in to us with your application).
- Replace windows – to make sure that the design or specification will not cause you problems in the future, for example with condensation.
- Install a satellite dish – as there are planning restrictions.
- Build an extension or conservatory – as this may cause problems for us in the future when we are maintaining the building, for example if we need to put up scaffolding.

If you cannot show that you had our written permission for any alterations to the outside of your property, you will have difficulty selling your flat. You are breaking the terms of your lease if you carry out alterations without our permission. You need to ask for our permission in writing. Complete a Tenants Request for Improvements/Alterations form and send this in to Leasehold Services.

You can complete this online: www.dacorum.gov.uk/home/housing/current-tenant/repairs-and-home-maintenance/home-improvement/tenants-request-for-improvements-or-alterations-form or Email: servicecharges@dacorum.gov.uk

Please give as many details as possible about the work that you want to carry out. We will only refuse permission if the work is likely to affect the safety of the building or cause a nuisance to your neighbours. If we give you permission, we may set certain conditions which you must keep to. Before you begin the work, you will also need to check if you need planning permission or building regulation approval. If you do not check, you will be breaking the conditions of your lease.

Can I replace the front door of my property?

Yes, but you must ask our permission first. Your front door has an essential role in protecting your home, your family and your neighbours.

Flat entrance doors are specially designed to resist the spread of fire and should only be replaced with a door which will resist fire for at least 30 minutes. You should not replace any entrance doors without our permission. If you want to replace an entrance door with one of a different specification, you may also need building regulations approval.

In some blocks, with long hallways inside your flat, you may also need fire-resistant doors inside your flat. If you live in a flat or maisonette where your door leads straight out onto the main street (and not in an enclosed shared area) these fire regulations do not apply. If you are in any doubt, please check with us first.

When asking for permission to change your entrance door, you need to be aware of the following:

- The new door must be able to resist fire for at least 30 minutes.
- We will not give permission for PVCu doors or glazed doors.
- Doors must be fitted with self-closing devices, steel (not aluminium) hinges and metal door catches.
- Doors should not have any large openings cut in them such as cat flaps. Letter boxes are allowed if there is no other way to have your post delivered, but should be in the lower third of the door. If you have changed your door in the past without our permission, please send us details of the work you have carried out.
- As long as the new door meets fire-safety standards, we will give you our permission for the work already carried out.
- Please be aware that if you have carried out an alteration we do not accept, for your safety and the safety of your neighbours, we will ask you to put the old door back on (or a door of the same specification) to meet building regulations. You must pay any costs involved.

Can I have a satellite dish installed?

If your block has a shared Integrated Reception Systems (IRS) aerial, which will provide a combination of satellite digital, terrestrial digital and radio, we will not give you permission to install an extra satellite dish. If your flat does not already have a socket to use the shared aerial, we will install a socket in your flat for a small charge. If you live in a maisonette you must get our written approval before having a satellite dish installed.

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For more information, please contact the Leasehold Services team by email: servicecharges@dacorum.gov.uk or telephone **01442 228000** and ask for **Leasehold Services**. Direct lines: **01442 228 799**.

Reviewed February 2020