

Requests to improve our properties Policy

Summary

This policy outlines our approach to managing resident requests to improve our property and make them suitable homes when needed.

Effective date

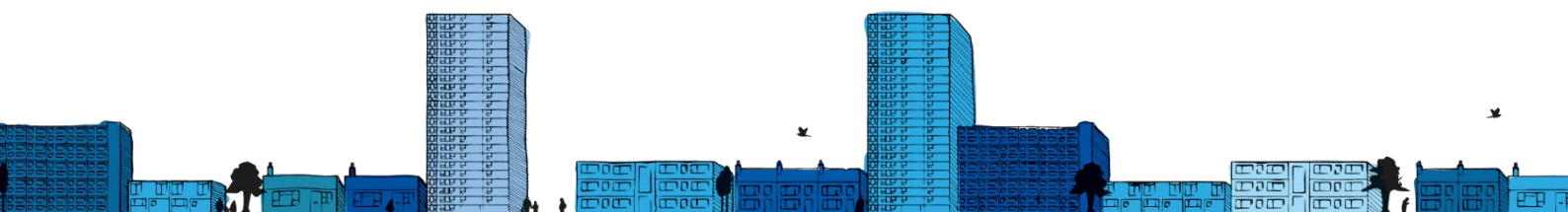
1 October 2024

Review

We will review this Policy every 3 years or when there has been an update to legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational changes.

Version

Version 1.2



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Scope

This policy covers all council Housing Revenue Account (HRA) dwellings including the common parts of blocks of flats and sheltered schemes.

Any reference in this policy to 'we', 'our' or 'us' refers to Portsmouth City Council, Local Authority Housing.

Any reference in this policy to 'tenant', 'customer' or 'resident' refers to a Portsmouth City Council, Local Authority Housing secure tenant, leaseholder or shared owner, depending on the lease.

Purpose

The purpose of the policy is to:

- Outline our approach to dealing with requests to improve our property and make them suitable homes when needed.



Requests for improvements

The policy is intended to cover the improvement work that benefit individual dwellings such as:

- showers
- additional rooms such as a bedroom
- scooter stores
- parking facilities

The cost of improvements, if approved will be our responsibility.

Requests for improvements should be sent to the relevant building repairs manager.

Improvement request approval criteria

The relevant building repairs manager will consider the request. The decision will be informed by:

- opportunities to transfer/exchange to more suitable property.
- cost of undertaking works is proportionate.
- budget availability considering other priorities.
- legislation, such as planning and health and safety.
- resource availability to manage the work, if the request is approved, the relevant building repairs manager will inform the resident and arrange for the work to be undertaken, as appropriate.

If the request is approved, the building repairs manager will inform the resident and advise them of the timescales and who will manage the improvements that have been agreed.

If the request is declined, the relevant building repairs manager will write to the tenant and:

- decline the request.
- state the reasons, e.g. makes the property unsafe, reduces property's value, makes it harder to let, not within scope of service, capital cost or maintenance cost of work not proportionate, insufficient demand or other alternative more suitable asset available.

Your responsibility

Requests for improvements should be sent to the relevant building repairs manager and include:

- details and evidence of demand, e.g. number of resident requests and benefits
- what facilities, services or improvements are required
- consequences, financial and otherwise, of not providing the improvement



Your voice

We provide tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to engage, influence and scrutinise the Landlord Strategies, policies and services, to include Resident Consortium together with repairs and maintenance focus groups.

If you would like to be included in future resident engagement focus groups and would like to know how to get involved, please contact us for more information:

You can contact our team by:

- Email: housing.engagement@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- Phone: 02392 834835
- Website: visit the [Resident engagement and community resources on our website](#)

What have we done to make sure this Policy is fair?

We completed an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to consider the positive and negative impacts this Policy may have on people with protected characteristics under the [Equality Act 2010](#). This Policy should have direct and positive equality and diversity impacts.

Regulation and legislation

We recognise the variety of legislation, and we will continue to monitor relevant legal guidance. The list below reflects some of the existing legal framework and relevant publications:

- [Housing Act 2004](#)
- [Equality Act 2010](#)

Related documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Portsmouth Homes Landlord Policies, Strategies and Reports - [Housing policies, strategies and privacy notices](#)
- Tenancy Agreement / Leasehold Agreement



How to feedback

If you have any questions around the policy or would like to know more about its application, please contact the relevant service in the first instance.

You can get this policy in large print, braille, audio or in another language by contacting your Housing Office. More information is available [translation, interpreting and audio information](#).

Compliments

To help us provide the best service we can. We would like to hear customer views on the services that they use. If the customer is pleased with a member of staff or service, please let us know.

- Telephone: 02392 606383
- Email address: HNBLandlordComplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk

Complaints

If a customer is unhappy, they can refer to our Landlord Complaints Policy.

- Online complaint form at [Make a housing complaint](#)
- Telephone: 02392 606383
- Email address: HNBLandlordComplaints@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- [Landlord complaints policy](#)

Housing Ombudsman Service

If a customer is unhappy, they can contact the Housing Ombudsman Service for advice and guidance at any time.

- Online complaint form on [the Housing Ombudsman Service website](#)
- Telephone: 0300 111 3000
- For more information, visit [Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code](#)

