



**Guidance for Leaseholders**  
**(Alterations to you leasehold property including flats and retail units)**

**Leasehold conveyancing documents – Licence for Alteration**

It is a requirement of most leases that a leaseholder cannot carry out alterations to his or her property without first obtaining a licence for alteration in writing from the Landlord. The extent of the alterations that can be done without license is set out in the lease.

Some leases prohibit any or all alterations, while some require consent for structural alterations only. Some allow for non-structural alterations without the requirement for a Licence for Alteration.

**Always read the lease**

If you are a leaseholder considering making alterations, make sure you always read the lease before you embark on any alterations or modifications, even if they seem trivial.

We would stress the importance of ensuring you have either the right to make alterations or have secured our consent as the Freeholder. Although uncommon, the Freeholder could force you to revert the property to its original state at potentially great cost to the Leaseholder.

As a leaseholder in an Ongo Homes owned property, you must obtain our permission to carry out certain alterations to your property. These include (but are not limited to) alterations to the kitchen, bathroom, boiler or heating system, and the removal of internal walls. Outside the property, external doors, windows and garden sheds are also included.

If we grant permission, it will be subject to various conditions such as the work being carried out by a competent tradesman and to the satisfaction of our surveyor should they visit. If you do not comply with the conditions you might be in breach of your leasehold agreement. If we refuse your application, we will explain our reasons for doing so.

**Building regulations and planning permission**

You might require building regulations approval or planning permission, depending on the nature and extent of the alteration. You can apply for these permissions first if you wish, but they will have no bearing on our decision to grant permission as your landlord.

We can refuse permission even if planning permission has been granted. If you do apply for these permissions, it is your responsibility to supply us with copies of the relevant documents.

**Leaving the property**

In most instances the alteration will be left in the property if you assign it or in some circumstances if you surrender the lease, responsibility for it will pass to the next leaseholder. It is your responsibility to pass on any relevant paperwork. Like the rest of the property, the alteration should be left in good condition.

## How to apply

<p>1) An alteration permission form must be completed and available by contacting our Customer Service Team. You will need to provide full details of the alteration you would like to carry out.</p>	
<p>2) The installation of any alteration must be carried out by a competent and qualified contractor and confirmation of your chosen contractor details must be provided. A permission form must be completed with information from the contractor as shown:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Please provide a quote on letter headed paper with details of the contractor. Quote must include a plan/layout of the current area (where work is to be carried out) and the new proposed layout showing the alteration to be installed.</li><li>• Quote from the contractor must also include a full description of the proposed work, materials to be used and how the works will be carried out.</li></ul> <p>**The above list is not exhaustive. You will be advised of any further requirements when your application is being considered. For certain alteration works you will need to provide evidence that your contractor has appropriate insurance cover. We will request this where necessary**</p>
<p>3) Any pictures taken via phone can be emailed if necessary to <a href="mailto:Enquiries@ongo.co.uk">Enquiries@ongo.co.uk</a>. Please use your first line of address as reference e.g. 'Permission request for 20 Ongo Road'</p>	

## Frequently asked Questions

### When do I need to have permission to alter my leasehold property?

You need to have our permission for all alterations which can include replacing a kitchen, bathroom, satellite dish, removing internal walls and replacing front doors.

### How do I apply?

You need to complete the Alteration application form. You must submit plans and supporting paperwork to Ongo Homes. We will look at your proposal and will, whenever possible give permission subject to certain conditions. For all works please provide the following:

- A layout plan of the whole property as it is now prior to the works including all rooms (even those unaffected by the works).
- A layout plan of the whole property as it will be after the works including all rooms (even those unaffected by the works).
- On the plans clearly show both the existing and proposed routes of plumbing if they are being altered.
- For showers and wet rooms please include full details of how walls and floors shall be made waterproof.
- For bathrooms, shower rooms and kitchens include details for mechanical air extraction systems showing how and where they will exit the property.
- For central heating systems include details of the existing and proposed location of the boiler, and how and where flue and pressure relief pipes will exit the building.
- If you are removing any whole or part of a load bearing wall please provide a supporting structural engineer's report (this is compulsory).

### **Does my property contain asbestos?**

There is a possibility that your property contains asbestos-based building materials or components. You are advised to appraise yourself as to whether this should be the case. Should you find, or suspect, that asbestos is present and that your proposals may affect it, then you should engage only a member of the Asbestos Removal Contractors Association to carry out removal or adaptation works. On no account may asbestos fibres be released outside of your flat; nor may asbestos-containing materials or waste be carried through, worked upon or handled or retained in the common parts of the building or estate without adequate notice, of not less than one full week, being given of the proposed date of the commencement of the work.

### **Can I put my pipework or cables into the floor area or above the ceiling?**

No. Unless Ongo Homes gives its specific permission no soil, waste, gas, water or heating pipework, electrical cables or any other services, components or equipment of any kind shall be chased into the floors above or below the flat, the external walls thereto or the load carrying walls therein. This is because this part of the structure remains in the ownership of Ongo Homes and does not form part of your lease.

### **What happens if I damage the structure while I am carrying out my alterations?**

Should any part of the structure adjacent to the proposed works be found to be inadequate or to be adversely affected by the building operations, or should any part of any adjacent flat be damaged by those operations, then it shall be replaced, repaired or adapted as may be required by Ongo Homes at your expense.

### **Who can carry out works to my electrics?**

Works to the electrical installations shall comply with BS 7671 and Part P: 2006 of the building regulations (2010 amendments) and must be carried out by a competent electrician registered as a domestic installer with NICEIC, IEE or ECA. Upon completion of the works the appropriate certificates shall be obtained and passed on to Ongo Homes.

### **Who can carry out works to my gas installations?**

All Gas installations shall be carried out by a competent Gas Safe Registered Engineer. On completion of the work a Gas Safety Record shall be obtained and a copy passed on to Ongo Homes.

### **Will I need any other approvals from North Lincolnshire Council?**

This conditional approval is provided by Ongo Homes in its capacity as Landlord. Therefore in addition to this conditional approval you may also need to contact your local council to obtain their approval for your proposed alterations. For example building regulations or planning permission.

### **I want to replace my windows and front door?**

Many flat leaseholders have or would prefer to change their front door with their own choice. If you are considering doing this you must ensure that it is a Fire Safety front door and ask for our consent before you fit it. The Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 requires a fire risk assessment of the common areas only. This includes the front doors of individual flats. The responsibility to arrange the assessment lies with Ongo Homes. So you should never alter your front door without taking advice from the Leasehold Team at Ongo Homes on the implications it would have on fire safety.

Your front door should be a fire safety door fitted with a self-closing device to meet the current fire safety guidance for flats. Altering the letterbox or adding a cat flap can affect the fire safety of your building and the common escape routes. The reason that a Fire Safety door is essential is that should there be a fire in your property it will not easily burn through or let smoke into the communal area which could prevent other people leaving the building safely.

If we give permission this does not relieve the Lessee from his obligation to pay toward the costs incurred by Ongo Homes in discharging its rights and obligations with regard to the maintenance, repair and improvement of the remaining windows of the block. Also please note the new windows become part of the structure of the building and therefore the responsibility of the landlord under the terms of the lease. Replacement windows must comply with building regulations, and trickle ventilation must be provided. The contractor must be approved either by Fensa, Certass or BSI, and registered under the competent person scheme to self-certify.