

## **Guidance for work in the Kitchen and Bathroom**

We have previously carried out a major decent homes programme that saw the renewal of items including kitchens and bathrooms to all of our properties that dramatically improved the homes of our tenants. These have been installed to a specification which meets current legislative and regulatory requirements.

As a result of this work, tenants have limited options as to what alterations they can undertake in these areas.

### **KITCHEN**

The Kitchen is to Ongo's Decent Homes standard. We would not grant permission for the items to be replaced with items that we cannot repair or maintain. Due to our Decent Homes Standards we do not allow tenants own units or fixings to be fitted. This also includes any tiling to the walls or changes to the lighting and pipe work.

One of the conditions in replacing and adding kitchen units, tiles etc, is to use our standard stock. Please contact a member of our Maintenance Team via our Customer Service Team with regards to current supply of kitchen, tiles etc.

If the kitchen units or other items you have are no longer available, all we ask is that any replacement cabinets or items closely match the existing due to the fact the originals are not available.

### **Frequently asked Questions:**

#### **Can I replace the kitchen myself with one that is of my own choosing?**

Our Decent Homes kitchens were designed by our contractor team who designed these with adequate storage, space and a safe layout in relation to the size and accommodation type of the property. On that basis we have accepted this layout as a safe and sustainable kitchen layout and we would not allow for this to be changed.

#### **Can I change the kitchen tap or kitchen sink with one that I like?**

We would not grant permission for the sink or taps to be replaced with items that we cannot repair or maintain. If the sink or taps are faulty please contact our Customer Service Team on 01724 279900 to arrange a repair.

#### **Can I remove or add kitchen units (wall and floor) or change the doors to these units?**

**Removing units** - Permission will only be granted if the unit removal will not affect our Decent Homes standard as we would not allow alterations to kitchens that would reduce the amount of storage that is currently available.

Before any removal takes place a drawing or sketch of the existing kitchen and the proposed alterations must be approved by Ongo Homes. This must show the cooker space, a provision for a washing machine (does not apply in sheltered accommodation where communal laundry facilities are provided) and a place for a refrigerator. The kitchen must remain in a suitable state for current and future tenants and there must be sufficient food storage. This will be assessed on an individual basis using the information above.

Where renewing kitchen units or unit doors, these must match the existing kitchen units.

If permission is granted, it is important to note the following conditions would apply:

- The wall and floor behind the removed units must be made good, any tiling must be made good to match the existing.
- The new units must not affect the layout of the kitchen. They must not cause any risks of collision or restrict access through the kitchen or while accessing doorways.
- The new units must not affect the electrical, gas or plumbing installations already in place.
- The Kitchen units you will be fitting will not form part of the property and must be maintained by yourselves and must be removed and the walls must be reinstated at no cost to Ongo Homes Limited at the end of your tenancy. Failure to do so may result in a recharge for removing the equipment and reinstating the plaster work.

**I would like a larger cooker and will need to remove a kitchen unit in order to accommodate this. Would you grant me permission for this?**

We would be able to look at this request and if permission is granted, the following conditions would apply:

- The standard of workmanship must be to the satisfaction of Ongo Homes Limited and carried out by a gas safe engineer who must provide the required certification which must be sent to Ongo Homes Limited.
- The Gas cooker must be fitted with an (FFD) Flame Failure Device to all the burners.
- The adapted worktop will need to be replaced with a new matching worktop and the single cupboard will need reinstating by yourself at the end of your tenancy. Failure to do so will mean a recharge for the works that Ongo Homes incurs for reinstating the items.
- The wall and floor behind the removed units must be made good, any tiling must be made good to match the existing.

**Can I paint my kitchen units/cabinets, wall tiles or wrap my worktop with a different material?**

We would not grant permission for the worktops to be wrapped in any material as the material cannot be removed without causing damage and if any repairs take place then the worktops would not match. Permission is refused for coverings to kitchen cupboards/units/doors such as Fablon or re-painting cupboards/units including the painting of wall tiles as these can cause damage and not easy to put back to original state at the end of the tenancy.

### **Can I replace your standard wall tiles with my own tiles (non-standard)?**

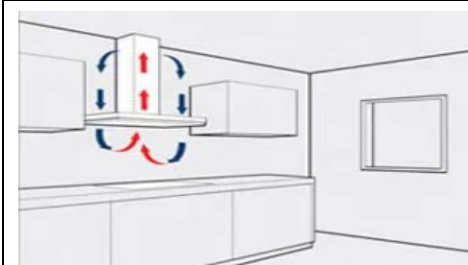
We only allow standard tiles to be used.

### **Can I change the kitchen worktop?**

Yes. Any new worktops must either match the existing or all be renewed and must be fitted with at least two rows of tiles as a splash back.

Any cuts to existing worktop must be carried out in an appropriate manner and a suitable worktop end fitted to close the bare worktop end. There must be a worktop to both sides of the cooker space this cannot be removed.

### **Can I install a cooker hood extraction fan?**



You will only be given permission to fit an 'air recirculation ventilation' type cooker hood extraction fan as these are installed without making a hole in the kitchen wall.

The air recirculation method uses the aluminium filters to absorb the grease, but the air is then passed through a carbon/charcoal filter to clean it and then passes the clean air back into the kitchen. If permission is granted, the following conditions would apply:

- The standard of workmanship must be to the satisfaction of Ongo Homes Limited and carried out by qualified electrician to BS 7671 who must provide the required minor works certification. A copy of this minor works certificate will need to be sent to Ongo Homes Limited on completion of the work.
- The kitchen extractor fan will not form part of the property and must be maintained by yourselves and removed at no cost to Ongo Homes at the end of your tenancy. Failure to do so may result in a recharge for removing the equipment.

### **Can I change the standard kitchen light fitting to downlights or other type of non-standard light fitting?**

We would not grant permission for any non-standard light fittings as we will be unable to repair or maintain these items for current and future tenants.

### **Can I replace the lino flooring with floor tiles?**

No. You will not be able to replace this flooring with your own. We only use a high quality, long lasting Polyvinyl sheet flooring for kitchens in all of our properties.

### Can I have a dishwasher or tumble dryer?

**DISHWASHER** - This can be installed but under the condition that no holes are made to the kitchen wall for waste water drainage. The waste water from the dishwasher must go through the sink trap (and this may need to be replaced with an appliance trap as shown).



The following conditions also apply:

- The dishwasher must be installed and plumbed in correctly by a suitably qualified person, there should be no alterations carried out on the, tiles or worktops to accommodate the dishwasher.
- The holes must be drilled with a hole saw and must not cause any structural damage to the units, if damage occurs then you must pay for the items to be replaced, failure to do so will mean a recharge for costs that Ongo Homes incurs.
- Any future maintenance required on the kitchen as a result of the installation of the dishwasher will be your responsibility and any costs incurred will need to be covered by yourself.
- Any floor unit removed will need to be reinstated at no cost to Ongo Homes Limited at the end of your tenancy. Failure to do so will mean a recharge for costs that Ongo Homes incurs.

**TUMBLE DRYER** - There are 2 methods of venting for a tumble dryer; either through a box or through a duct in the kitchen wall. Ongo Homes will only allow permission for a tumble dryer when vented through a box kit along with the following conditions:

- Flats and maisonettes must seek specialist advice from Ongo Homes in the appropriate method of installing ventilation.
- A ventilation kit must be included within the installation.
- Regard should be made to potential impact upon electric, plumbing and drainage.

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| Permission granted when using a vent box kit  | <b>No permission</b> through a duct in the wall                                      |

**I have a flat in sheltered accommodation and have access to communal laundry facilities. However, I would like to install a washing machine in my kitchen. Will you grant me permission for this?**

No. The kitchen space within the flats in these blocks are small and therefore, have no space for washing machines. This is the reason why these blocks have communal laundry facilities for you to use.

## **BATHROOM**

The Bathroom is to Ongo's Decent Homes standard. We would not grant permission for the items to be replaced with items that we cannot repair or maintain. Due to our Decent Homes Standards we do not allow tenants own units or fixings to be fitted. This also includes any tiling to the walls or changes to the lighting and pipe work.

### **Frequently asked Bathroom questions:**

**Can I replace the bathroom with a suite of my own choosing or individual items such as the toilet, basin or bath?**

The bathroom suite fitted is already to Ongo's Decent Homes standard. We would not grant permission for items to be removed and replaced for a tenants own items.

**Can I remove the bath and replace this with a shower?**

No. We would not normally allow a general needs property occupied by families to remove the bath for a shower as we already provide a bath/shower mixer tap over the bath. We would not grant permission for this request unless instructed by an Occupational Therapist (OT) assessment. We would ask you to make a request via the DFG (Disabled Facilities Grant) route, rather than this Alteration Permission route.

Your first point of call would be for a referral to be made to see an OT. The OT would arrange an assessment for you to see what disabled improvements are needed on a case by case basis and will make recommendations for any adaptation work to your home after contacting Ongo Homes on your behalf while also working with the Home Assistance Team at North Lincolnshire Council.

If it is found that you will need to self-fund this alteration then you are able to send this OT assessment or letter of support to Ongo Homes as proof that this shower is required along with a request to look at this proposal via our Aids and Adaptations process. You can find more information in the Guidance doc for Aids and Adaptations.

**Can I replace the toilet with a disabled toilet (Closomat, Geberit or wash and dry toilet)?**

As explained above, any disabled adaptation request will need an OT assessment undertaken. You can find more information in the Guidance for Aids and Adaptations document.

**Can I tile the floor?**

No. You will only be able to replace the flooring with a like for like replacement of your own design. We only use a high quality, long lasting Polyvinyl sheet flooring for bathrooms in all of our properties.

**Can I fully tile the walls in the bathroom?**

We do not give permission for all walls in a bathroom to be fully tiled due to maintenance issues and we do not give permission for tiles to be replaced with non-standard tiles that we cannot repair or maintain.

**For all types of alterations the following also apply:**

- The standard of workmanship must be to the satisfaction of Ongo Homes, and carried out by qualified and competent trade person. A permission form must be completed including a sketch of the proposed layout and written method statement.
- The asbestos report must be checked to ensure Asbestos Containing Materials' (ACM's) are not being removed or encapsulated. Any removal required will be undertaken by Ongo Homes at your expense.
- The standard of products used must be to the satisfaction of Ongo Homes.
- All debris as a result of the improvements must be disposed of in an appropriate manner.
- Work must be carried out in a manner to ensuring it is in line with relevant Health and Safety guidelines.
- No costs in connection with the work to be incurred by Ongo Homes Limited and we will not be responsible for the future maintenance of the improvement.
- The work must be completed within 3 months of the initial request. Failure to do so will mean you having to apply again for permission.
- Once completed Ongo Homes may inspect the completed work and if the work is not completed to an appropriate standard may recharge to complete any remedial work required.
- Permission is limited to the works specified in the initial request.

**Retrospective Permission:**

If at any time it becomes clear that an alteration had been completed without permission, then the tenant will be contacted and retrospective permission will be granted provided that the necessary paperwork/certificate is completed and returned confirming that all of the above conditions have been met. We may ask you to remove, put back or make good any alteration we have not approved and/or which does not meet our standards.

## How to apply:

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| <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> | <p>3) 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.</p> <p>4) 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.</p> <p>5) **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>6) 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>                              |  |