

# Home Improvements Policy

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## 1. Our policy statement

- 1.1. At Sage Homes we strive to provide the best affordable homes with the best customer support. The energy efficiency and specification of our homes are designed to provide the best possible foundation for our customers. This is backed by the continuous pursuit of providing the best customer support, driven by empathy and the ambition to continually improve.
- 1.2. Sage understands that when you have just moved into your home, you may want to give your home a personal touch by putting your own stamp on things. Or maybe you have lived in your home for a few years and feel like a change.
- 1.3. We will do this by transparent, fair, and efficient management of home improvements requests to balance the needs of our individual residents, our future customers, and the impact on the property.
- 1.4. If you wish to make any changes or alterations to your property (other than internal decorations) you must first apply in writing to us for permission.
- 1.5. We will normally allow non-structural improvements to be made and will not unreasonably refuse permission but have a responsibility to make sure that what you are planning to do will not:
  - Put the building at risk of damage during or after the works have been carried out
  - compromise fire safety, this includes screwing camera doorbells into fire doors, frames and walls
  - have any health and safety implications or break any statutory or legal requirements (eg removing window restrictors) or changes which increase damp, mould or excessive condensation risks
  - cause a nuisance to other residents in the building eg replacing carpets with hard flooring
  - reduce the rental, re-let or re-sale value of the property or other nearby properties or increase any maintenance costs to Sage Homes.
- 1.6. We will not unreasonably refuse consent for an improvement or alteration to take place, but should an application be refused you have the right to request a review of our decision.
- 1.7. You must make sure that any improvements do not compromise existing warranties, guarantees, or insurance arrangements on your home, including NHBC warranties or other building warranties.
- 1.8. Making changes without our permission breaks the terms of our tenancy or lease agreements.
- 1.9. We reserve the right to ask customers to reverse any changes made without permission to meet Sage's standards. If customers do not comply, Sage can take legal action such as obtaining a court order for the work to be done or recover costs for any expenses we have.
- 1.10. All costs arising from your improvement request will be your responsibility, including any fees we incur for legal advice, surveyor assessments, compliance checks, or

inspections required to assess your application.

- 1.11. We may require you to provide a deposit or security arrangement where there are significant risks that improvements need to be removed or remedial work is required to meet our standards.
- 1.12. Any improvements you make will become part of the property and remain when your tenancy ends. We will not normally provide compensation for improvements unless specifically agreed in writing beforehand, and any such compensation will reduce over time to reflect wear and depreciation.
- 1.13. If improvements are not completed to acceptable standards or without proper approvals, you may be required to remove them and restore the property to its original condition at your own expense when your tenancy ends.
- 1.14. Where we agree to maintain an improvement after installation, this will be confirmed in writing. However, we cannot guarantee like-for-like replacement if the improvement later needs renewing.
- 1.15. In applying this policy, your individual needs including any vulnerabilities and communication requirements, will be assessed to identify any additional support or reasonable adjustments in line with our Helping You Access Our Services Policy.
- 1.16. We use feedback from customers who have requested home improvements to refine our processes and ensure this policy delivers clear, accessible guidance that meets residents' needs.
- 1.17. This policy has been developed in line with the following acts and standards:
  - Delivering Housing Adaptations for Disabled People: A Good Practice Guide (2006)
  - Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
  - Care Act 2014
  - Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1996.

## 2. Scope of this policy

- 2.1. This policy covers the situation where a Sage Homes customer wishes to make an alteration or improvement to their property. The requested alteration will be arranged by customers and carried out at their own expense.
- 2.2. This policy applies to all homes managed by Sage Homes or anyone acting on our behalf.
- 2.3. This policy applies to all Sage Homes' customers including tenants, shared owners, and leaseholders.

## 3. Equality and diversity

- 3.1. Sage is committed to making sure all services are accessible to all our residents. Our staff will be trained to communicate appropriately with you, and they have the relevant information and access to translation services to make sure they fully understand our you.
- 3.2. This policy will be applied in a way which makes sure we treat all customers with

fairness and respect. We recognise our duty to advance equality of opportunity and prevent discrimination or victimisation on the grounds of age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, race, religion or belief, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and any other protected characteristics defined within the [Equality Act 2010](#).

- 3.3. On request we will provide translations of all our documents, policies and procedures in various languages and formats including braille and large print. Our website also has accessibility tools allowing you to personalise each web page to make it easier to read.

## 4. Delivery of the policy

- 4.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Repairs Policy
- Accessible Homes Policy
- CCTV and Doorbell Camera Policy
- Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy
- Helping You Access Our Services Policy.

- 4.2. The effective delivery of this policy, including training, guidance and support required by staff for implementation of this policy will be provided by the Repairs and Voids Team.

- 4.3. We will consult with customers when reviewing this policy and we will complete an Equality Impact Assessment to assess accessibility for our customers to identify and remove or reduce any barriers to our service.

## 5. Review of the policy

- 5.1. We will review this policy at least once every two years to make sure it remains relevant and accurate unless:

- Legislation/regulation or industry changes require otherwise, ensuring that it continues to meet our aims and any good practice developments
- We identify any problems or failures in this policy as a result of customer and stakeholder feedback, complaints, or findings from any independent organisations.

Version	Checked by	Amendments	Approved at/by	Date of Approval	Published by	Date of Review
3.2	Head of Responsive Repairs and Voids	Strategic review and update to corporate template	Leadership Team	Aug 23	Office Management	Aug 25
3.4	Head of Responsive Repairs and Voids	Awaab's Law Compliance	Leadership Team	Oct 25	Office Management	Oct 27