



Loreburn Group

Alteration & Improvement Policy

Policy	Alteration & Improvement Policy					
Version reference	3					
Approved by	MC		LET		MT	X
Date of approval	February 2023					
Review period	Every 3 Years or as legislation or substantive changes occur					
Review due	February 2026					
Policy champion	Head of Investment and Sustainability					

Table of contents

1	Purpose of this Policy	2
2	Related policies, procedures, and documents	2
3	Legislative background	3
4	Aims of this Policy.....	3
5	How we will achieve our aims and objectives	4
6	Responsibilities chart.....	5
7	Scottish Social Housing Charter – Performance Monitoring	6
8	Measuring performance.....	8
9	Policy review.....	8

1 Purpose of this Policy

- 1.1 Loreburn encourages customers to improve their homes. This policy outlines the broad principles that will be used by Loreburn Housing Association (LHA) in the management of alterations and improvements, taking account of statutory and regulatory requirements.
- 1.2 Legislation & Regulatory Framework
LHA will comply with the law and any relevant guidance from the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR). Specifically, this policy should be read in conjunction with the Right to Compensation for Improvements provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.
- 1.3 If LHA gives landlord's consent to tenants for alterations or improvements to their home, this is done without prejudice. Tenants will require to comply with any statutory or regulatory requirements in relation to planning consents and building warrants – further advice can be provided by the relevant local authority. In addition, tenants will require to ensure that any works are carried out by a competent contractor, who complies with all relevant building regulations, etc

2 Related policies, procedures, and documents

- 2.1 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following LHA policies and procedures:
 - Asbestos Management Policy & Procedure
 - Adverse Events Policy & Procedure
 - CCTV Policy & Procedure
 - Compensation Policy & Procedure
 - Complaints Policy & Procedure
 - Cyclical Compliance Policy & Procedure
 - Development Policy & Procedure
 - Electrical Safety Policy & Procedure

- Gas Safety Policy & Procedure
- Fire Safety Policy & Procedure
- Loreburn Design Guide
- Planned Maintenance & Major Repairs Policy & Procedure
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy & Procedure
- Reactive Repairs Policy & Procedure
- Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement.
- Void Property Management Policy & Procedure

3 Legislative background

3.1 In preparation for this Policy, we have taken account of:

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
- The Scottish Secure Tenants (Compensation for Improvements) Regulations 2002
- Scottish Housing Quality Standards (2004)
- Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing (2014)

4 Aims of this Policy

4.1 The Alterations & Improvement Policy aims to ensure that the Association appropriately records and monitors any alterations or improvements within our housing stock in accordance with legislation and good practice guidelines.

4.2 To establish clear policy and procedure for tenants and staff for granting permission to carry out alterations and improvements to properties owned by Loreburn. To ensure any work carried out by tenants does not detrimentally affect the property or cause undue nuisance or annoyance to other residents within the area.

4.3 The main objectives of this policy include:

- Ensuring that systems are established to enable the Association to comply with its duty in relation to alterations and improvements to dwellings.
- Establishing an effective monitoring system.
- Having systems in place, which ensure that processes are carried out efficiently, effectively, and economically for both Association and customer
- Ensuring that audit trails exist within the Association's property databases;
- Reviewing policies, procedures, and systems regularly to ensure they are up to date and reflect current best practice guidance and legislation.
- Take note of all alteration requests that may lead to compensation, if written permission is not granted the customer will not be entitled to any compensation

5 How we will achieve our aims and objectives

- 5.1 If a tenant submits a request to alter or improve their home, LHA will not refuse permission unreasonable. More complex request guidance would be sought from the association's insurers.
- 5.2 Permission for any alterations must be requested in writing (via letter or email). Only on receipt of confirmation and agreement of the terms and conditions outlined in the permission letter can the works commence.
- 5.3 Permission confirmation should be received in 1 month of receipt of the written application.
- 5.4 If permission is refused the customer will be notified by letter within 1 month of receipt of written application.

- 5.5 LHA have a number a Passive Property, these are identified on the Housing Management System, approval for alterations in these properties will not be granted due to these works negatively affecting the performance of the property.
- 5.6 If alteration have been carried out without permission the customer will be recharged for the removal and making good remedial works required, this will be in line with the association recharge policy.
- 5.7 If the customer has carried out works that are deemed as unsafe on post inspection, the customer will be responsible for remedial works, this will be in line with the associations recharge policy
- 5.8 If a property becomes void that has had authorised alterations or improvements carried out by the customer, the Right to Compensation for Improvements provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 may apply.

6 Responsibilities chart

6.1 The chart below illustrates the responsibilities of all staff pertaining to this Policy:

Responsibilities	CEO & Management Committee	Loreburn Executive Team	Management Team	Team Managers	Technical Officer	Asset management Assistant
To set the policy and direction with regards to Alterations & Improvements	✓					
Ensure staff have a robust understanding of Health & Safety requirements and associated risks relevant to their roles			✓			

Responsibilities	CEO & Management Committee	Loreburn Executive Team	Management Team	Team Managers	Technical Officer	Asset management Assistant
Policy Champion			✓			
Manage service, reporting and update LET as required			✓			
Oversee A & I programme				✓		
Responsibility for day to day management of A & I programme						✓
Record request, liaise with customer and carry out visit if required					✓	
Carry out inspections of A&Is and ensure conditions are complied with as required					✓	
Update Housing Management System with all contacts & correspondence					✓	✓
Ensure customer feedback is used to improve service				✓		
Working with Head of OD & HR ensure staff have appropriate training				✓		
Ensure policy is reviewed every three years or as necessary			✓			

7 Scottish Social Housing Charter – Performance Monitoring

7.1 The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets out the standards and outcomes that all Scottish social landlords should achieve when conducting their housing activities. These are used to monitor performance and to ensure customers are receiving a high standard of service.

7.2 There are five relevant charter outcomes, these are described below:

- **Equalities**

Social landlords should ensure every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services. We can achieve this by prompt resolution of estate management complaints, and by offering solutions to meet the needs of our customers.

- **Communication**

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides. Loreburn HA can achieve this outcome by using a variety of methods of communication from face-to-face conversations to social media. Customers should be able to have queries about the management of their neighbourhood answered promptly.

- **Participation**

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with. Loreburn H A will use the communication methods outlined above and look to our Customer Engagement Strategy to engender a culture where customers can influence the management of their own neighbourhood.

- **Neighbourhood and Communities**

Social landlords, working in partnership with other agencies, help to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe. Where appropriate Loreburn will work with other agencies such as

Police Scotland, and social work to tackle issues which are of concern to our residents.

- **Tenancy Sustainment and Support**

Tenants get the information they need on how to obtain support to remain in their home and ensure suitable support is available, including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations. We will offer advice and assistance to residents to help them maintain their tenancy by referring them to appropriate agencies or by organising support by us or other support services.

8 Measuring performance

- 8.1 Performance is monitored through Loreburn H A's Performance Management Framework using the Scottish Housing Regulator Annual Return Charter Indicators, House Mark and Loreburn HA's Strategic Performance Indicators and operational performance indicators.
- 8.2 Loreburn HA will consult customers, stakeholders, and other agencies to continually measure good practice.
- 8.3 The Policy will adhere to Loreburn HA's commitment to continuous improvement and value for money.

9 Policy review

- 9.1 The Policy Champion is Head of Investment & Sustainability.
- 9.2 The Policy Champion is responsible for reviewing the policy and required.
- 9.3 This Policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner as required due to legislative or substantive change.