

Compensation for improvements

Guidance Notes

These notes are to help you decide if you can claim for improvements and alterations you have made to your home, when your tenancy ends.

This document is for guidance only and does not give a legal interpretation or a summary of all the rules, which apply to the scheme.

Which tenancies qualify?

- Assured Tenancy.
- Assured Non-Shorthold Tenancy.

Which tenancies do **not** qualify?

- Assured Shorthold (Starter) Tenancy.

Do I qualify?

Yes, if:

- The work was carried out after 1 April 1994.
- The claim is made during the four weeks period of notice or within 14 days of your tenancy ending.
- You paid for the work yourself.
- You have taken over the tenancy from the person who did pay for the work, such as a partner or parent. If you are not sure, contact the Strategic Programming Team responsible for the area you live in. (Contact details are at the back of this guide).
- You can provide the original receipts for the cost of the work carried out to justify your claim.
- You received written permission to carry out the work from Wakefield and District Housing (WDH) or Wakefield Council.

No, if:

- Your tenancy is ending because of a breach of your tenancy agreement.
- The work was done before 1 April 1994.
- Your claim was made more than 14 days after your tenancy ended.
- You cannot provide the original receipts for the cost of the work carried out.
- You do not have written permission for the work carried out from WDH or Wakefield Council.
- You have purchased your home under the right to buy, or right to acquire scheme.
- Your claim for compensation amounts to less than £50.
- We have already paid compensation for the improvements.

What can I claim for?

- The costs you have paid out for material and labour.

Note: The maximum compensation we will pay for any improvements done to the property is £3,000 and the minimum is £50. Under the scheme we cannot pay any compensation if the amount falls under £50 for any claim.

What can't I claim for?

- Your own labour, if you carried out any of the work yourself.
- Appliances such as built-in cookers, hobs and ovens and fridges and so on.
- Professional fees you may have incurred from architects, the drawing up of plans, or planning application fees.

What improvements can I claim for?

The following list gives the qualifying improvements set out under the scheme. Each improvement has been allocated a 'notional life', this means the useful life span of the improvement before it would need to be renewed or upgraded. This is used to work out the amount of compensation we would pay.

Qualifying Improvement	Notional Life (years)
1. Bath or shower	12
2. Wash-hand basin	12
3. Toilet	12
4. Kitchen sink	10
5. Storage cupboards in bathroom or kitchen	10
6. Work surfaces for food preparation (worktops)	10
7. Space or water heating	12
8. Thermostatic radiator valves	7
9. Insulation of pipes, water tank or cylinder	10
10. Loft insulation	20
11. Cavity wall insulation	20
12. Draught proofing of external doors or windows	8
13. Double glazing or other external window replacement or secondary glazing	20
14. Rewiring or the provision of power and lighting or other electrical fittings (including smoke detectors)	15
15. Any object, which improves the security of the house, but not including burglar alarms	10

How do you calculate how much compensation will be paid?

We consider certain facts about the original cost of the improvements. The assessment will include someone from WDH visiting your home to inspect the improvements.

We will be checking:

- Whether or not the cost of the improvement was excessive.
- The quality of the improvement meets WDH's approved standard.
- The current condition of the improvement.
- Whether the improvement has deteriorated less or more than provided for in the notional life for that improvement.
- The improvement was installed in accordance with any regulations or standards, such as electrical regulations.

Following this inspection the original cost of the improvements submitted will be worked out with the findings. We will deduct any grants you may have received towards the cost of the improvements or alterations.

The compensation payable is shown as a fraction of the initial costs of the improvement divided by the notional life allocated to the improvement, multiplied by the number of useful years left since the date you completed the work.

Example

Your improvement costs £2,000, excluding appliances. The notional life is ten years and your tenancy ends six years after you installed it. There would be four years left of what is expected as being the useful life of the improvement.

Compensation would be £800 (£2,000 divided by 10 = £200 x 4 = £800).

We will offset any compensation payable to you against any debt you may owe WDH, such as rent arrears.

Any amount of compensation awarded is subject to the improvement or alteration being left in the condition they were in when the surveyor visited your property

Where should I send my completed claim form?

To the Strategic Programming Team responsible for the part of the district you live in. Remember to attach the original receipts so we can process it straight away.

Your claim will be acknowledged within ten days of WDH receiving it.

Whatever the outcome of your claim, you will receive a letter explaining how we arrived at the final decision or amount of compensation payable to you.

Do I have the right to appeal against the outcome of my claim?

Yes. You should appeal to the Area Programming Manager within 28 days of receiving your letter. Your appeal should state why you think the decision is wrong.

The Area Programming Manager will evaluate your claim to ensure the procedures have been followed and the calculation has been carried out correctly.

Your will be contacted by letter to explain what the outcome of your appeal is. The Area Programming Manager will either make a revised offer of compensation or confirm the original decision.

Strategic Programming Team Address

Strategic Programming Team (East)		
Wakefield and District Housing -Strategic Programming Team (East)		
Wakefield Road, Featherstone, Pontefract WF7 5DG		
Phone: 01977 788255		
Areas covered:		
Ackton	Ferry Fryston	Ryhill
Ackworth	Fitzwilliam	Sharlston
Airedale	Havercroft	South Elmsall
Altofts	Hemsworth	South Hiendley
Badsworth	Kinsley	South Kirkby
Castleford	Kirkthorpe	Streethouse
Crofton	Knottingley	Thorpe Audlin
Darrington	Normanton	Upton
Featherstone	Nostell	Winterset
Ferrybridge	Pontefract	Wragby

Strategic Programming Team (West)		
Wakefield and District Housing Strategic Programming Team (West)		
Wakefield Road, Featherstone, Pontefract WF7 5DG		
Phone: 01977 788248		
Areas covered:		
Alverthorpe	Kettlethorpe	Portobello
Belle Vue	Kirkhamgate	Thornes
Bretton	Lupset	Sandal
Crigglestone	Middlestown	Stanley
Darnley	Netherton	Wakefield City Centre
Eastmoor	Notton	Walton
Flanshaw	Ossett	Wrenthorpe
Hall Green	Outwood	
Horbury	Peacock	