

# 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 a member of our Survey team by phone on **01977 788248**,

or write to **WDH Survey team, Merefield House, Whistler Drive, Castleford, WF10 5HX.**

- 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 WDH or your local authority.

**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 your local authority.
- You have purchased your home under the Right to Buy, or Right to Acquire schemes.
- 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)
Bath or shower	12
Wash-hand basin	12
Toilet	12
Kitchen sink	10
Storage cupboards in bathroom or kitchen	10
Work surfaces for food preparation (worktops)	10
Space or water heating	12
Thermostatic radiator valves	7
Insulation of pipes, water tank or cylinder	10
Loft insulation	20
Cavity wall insulation	20
Draught proofing of external doors or windows	8
Double glazing or other external window replacement or secondary glazing	20
Rewiring or the provision of power and lighting or other electrical fittings (including smoke detectors)	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 check.

- 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 ( $\text{£}2,000 \text{ divided by } 10 = \text{£}200 \times 4 = \text{£}800$ ).

**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 Survey team, remember to attach the original receipts so we can process it straight away. Your claim will be acknowledged within ten days of the Survey team 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 survey manager within 28 days of receiving your letter. Your appeal should state why you think the decision is wrong.

The survey manager will evaluate your claim to ensure the procedures have been followed and the calculation has been carried out correctly.

You will be contacted by letter to explain what the outcome of your appeal is. The survey manager will either make a revised offer of compensation or confirm the original decision.

## Right to Compensation for Improvements Claim Form

Please read the guidance notes before completing the claim form.

The completed form should be sent to the Survey team, WDH, Merefield House Castleford WF10 5HX.

Tenant's name:		
Type of tenancy agreement you have:		
Address of property where the improvements were carried out:		
Contact details: (please specify)	Home / work / mobile	
Email:	Home / work / mobile	
<b>Please give details of the improvement(s) you are claiming compensation for. Use the continuation page if needed.</b>		
Work:	Date started:	
	Date finished:	
	Cost*:	£
Work:	Date started:	
	Date finished:	
	Cost*:	£
Work:	Date started:	
	Date finished:	
	Cost*:	£
*You can include materials and employed labour but not the cost of your own labour or appliances installed, for example, cooker. You <b>must</b> attach the original receipts to support the cost of your claim.		
<b>Please give details of any grant or minor works help under Part VIII of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 or help from the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme that you have had for the improvement work (amount, date, type of grant, what it was for).</b>		
Have you applied for, or had, compensation for this improvement from WDH before?		
Date your tenancy ends:		
If your claim is successful what address would you like your payment to be sent to?		

Please use this section if you need to give more details about the improvement(s) you are claiming for:

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**Declaration**

**I declare that the information I have given is correct.**

**I understand that if I deliberately give false information, I may be prosecuted.**

Tenant's signature:	
Print name:	
Date signed:	