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## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This FAQ will be maintained on a rolling basis as staff raise queries or where clarification is required on any aspects of the policy and procedure. FAQs should be directed to the Business Improvement Team.

### **1. Should residents contact Council Housing before they contact other council services to get any planning permission or other consents?**

Staff should encourage residents to contact their landlord/freeholder before applying for any formal planning permission/consents. As the landlord/freeholder, we can provide informal advice to residents on whether any structure/alteration/improvement is likely to get consent from us (as required under all residents' tenancy agreements and/or lease agreements and the new Resident Alterations and Improvement Policy). If a resident applies for and gains building control/planning permission from our Planning Department, that does not necessarily mean that we as the freeholder would grant permission. Conversely, where an alteration/improvement application is made to us first, if the alteration/improvement requires building control/planning consent, we may withhold or refuse our permission where it is obvious that a building/planning or other type of consent is first required before we make our decision. To assist residents and to avoid residents incurring abortive building/planning costs, it is good practice for staff to encourage residents to contact us first about any proposed alteration/improvement application. (24/2/15)

### **2. Is there a charge of £45.00 for alteration/improvements inspections?**

There is NO charge for surveyor inspections or re-inspections directly related to making an alteration and improvement application (see bullet (e) on the application form). This is to encourage residents to make applications to us. However, there are still charges for other types of inspections (e.g. Leaks or complaints from residents that need to be investigated and which require surveyor time), which are not directly related to making an application for alterations/improvements. (24/2/15).

### **3. Should residents complete additional application forms if there is more than one alteration/improvement that is planned?**

Additional application forms can be completed where there is more than one (or additional alteration/improvements) and which require individual planning/building consent. Officers should ensure residents are advised to complete and return a second application form where there is more than one significant alteration/improvement. Each case should be assessed on its individual merits/circumstances and advice offered accordingly. (24/2/15).

### **4. Where should alteration/improvement cases be logged and tracked?**

All alteration/improvement cases that are identified should be logged on the central alterations and improvements spreadsheet which is on the s drive. This is maintained by Housing Managers. Staff should also ensure that individual correspondence is maintained locally for audit purposes on individual resident records (e.g. using Northgate and Iclipse).