

Compensation for Improvements Fact Sheet



An information sheet for Lewes District Council Tenants

HOW DOES THE COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS SCHEME WORK?

If you are a Council tenant and your tenancy is ending, which is usually if you are moving, you may be able to get compensation for improvements you have made to your home.

Who qualifies?

Most Council tenants qualify. You will not get compensation if you are buying your home through the Right to Buy or Rent to Mortgage scheme.

What can I claim for?

You can claim for improvements such as:

- New kitchen
- New bathroom
- Insulation/draught proofing
- Central heating
- Double glazing
- Rewiring
- Security measures

The work should have been started on or after 1 April 1994.

You cannot claim for your own labour.

How do I claim?

You should make a claim when you tell the Council you want to end the tenancy of the home you improved. You also have up to 14 days after your tenancy ends to make a claim.

We will need to know:

- Your name and address
- What improvements you have made
- How much each improvement cost
- The date the improvements were made

It is better if you write to us. If you are not sure, ask your Housing Officer how to claim.

If you have already moved before you contact us, please give us your previous address as well.

You should have asked for permission before you made the improvement. If you didn't, then you can apply for it when you make your claim. In some circumstances we may refuse permission and require you to reinstate the property to its original condition.

It also helps us if you can send us the original receipts or invoices.

How much will I get?

We will look at the cost of your improvements and make adjustments depending on:

- How long ago it was done
- The condition of the improvement when you claim
- Whether you got a grant to help you make the improvement
- Whether you owe us any money
- Whether the cost of the improvement, or the quality, is higher than it would have been had the Council done it.

The value of any improvement will go down as it gets older and the more use you had out of it.

We will take off the amount of any grant you received, any rent owed, or recharges payable at the end of your tenancy.

We will also look at how necessary the improvement was at the time.

You can get a maximum of £3,000 for any one improvement, but you will not get any compensation if the amount is below £50.

What if I'm not happy with the decision?

If you're not happy with the amount of compensation we offer, or a decision not to compensate, you can make a complaint to the Council.

Please ask for a copy of our leaflet – “Making a comment or complaint about a Council Service”, which explains our process.

You can also go to our website on www.lewes.gov.uk/council/521.asp for further information on how to make a complaint and complete an online form.

How to find out more?

If you would like more details, please ask us for a copy of the leaflet “A better deal for tenants – Your Right to Compensation for Improvements”.

You can download a copy from www.communities.gov.uk/index.asp?id=1152128

This fact sheet can be made available in large print, audiotape, disk or in another language upon request. Telephone 01273 484141 or email lewesdc@lewes.gov.uk

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