



A guide to Window & Door Replacement

What you need to know...



Introduction

Ashford Borough Council undertook a substantial installation programme of UPVC windows and doors during the 1990's. Since then, the market and legislation have all changed a lot.

The design of windows and doors and the options available have all improved greatly:

- New windows have 'espagnolette' locks that have multipoint locking rather than single point locking that was typical of the old style cockspur handles.
- Frames contain more internal chambers for strength, security and improved thermal insulation
- Frames can now accommodate thicker glazing units with special coatings that also improve thermal insulation and security
- Windows have internal glazing beads that provide improved security
- Improvements in hinges allow dedicated windows to be 'egress windows' that aid escape in the event of a fire.

Although existing plastic window frames may still, generally, be sound, the incidence of failed or failing glazing units (where they fog-up inside) and failing ironmongery, together with the increasing difficulty in obtaining parts that are now obsolete (e.g. glazing beads) means that it is now more economic to replace windows and doors complete, rather than refurbish them.

Despite them being more expensive, we now prefer solid composite doors, rather than UPVC doors, as these have also improved significantly in quality, design, security and appeal.

Features Of New Windows And Doors?

- Windows and doors will have white UPVC frames.
- Windows have a minimum of an 'A' rating for thermal efficiency.
- Windows and doors will meet the 'Secured by Design' security standard.
- Windows and Doors will comply with PAS 24 security standard.
- Windows and doors will comply with BS6375 2009 Pts 1 - 3 for performance.
- Windows will have internal glazing beads for security.
- Glazed units will be a minimum of 28mm thick.
- Obscure glazing, to bathrooms windows and doors, will be 'Cotswold' pattern.
- Window handles for windows will typically be white and lockable – handles for egress windows will not be key lockable.
- Windows will be fitted with trickle vents to comply with the Building Regulations.
- Windows will have sub-cills and concealed drainage holes.
- Doors will have low-level thresholds.
- Front/main entrance doors will be a four panel design, white inside and out.
- The top half of front/main entrance doors will be glazed in obscure glass, for privacy, and the bottom half will have solid panels.
- Front/main entrance doors will be fitted with letterboxes and a door viewer/spy hole.
- Door handles will be DDA compliant.
- Rear/side secondary entrance doors will be a two - panel design with glazing above the mid-rail only.

What happens and when?

Before the works:

If the property was built before the year 2000, an asbestos survey is essential for these works to proceed. As well as inspecting the window surrounds the asbestos surveyor will look at all the other rooms to inform/update our asbestos register.

Our surveyor will look both inside and out of the property but will only need to inspect a sample number of properties. If he needs to inspect the property, he will make an appointment with you directly.

Once we have appointed a contractor, we will write to you giving details and contact numbers for him. The contractor will then contact you to introduce themselves, and will agree a start date with you, usually giving at least seven days' notice. However, if the contractor has been let down on the day by a neighbour, he may approach you to see if you are prepared to be a substitute.

Please tell us about any special needs that you may have as early on in the process as possible.

During the Works:

Please appreciate that these works will be disruptive and your co-operation is essential. The property will become a work area and you will not be able to use rooms while operatives are working in them.

The contractor will liaise with you directly to arrange access times to carry out the work.

The time required to undertake the works will depend on the number of windows and doors to be replaced, but it is anticipated that it will not take longer than two to three days.

To allow the works to proceed smoothly, you need to be ready for the contractor and ensure that the space around windows and doors is accessible for him.

Once you have a start date for your home, you will have to remove curtains and blinds that are fixed to windows and doors and be ready for the contractor. Please also move furniture and other valuables away from work areas to assist access and prevent breakages. Before works start, the contractor will advise you of what needs to be moved and, if you have difficulty in doing so yourself, may be able to help you to do so.

It is the contractor's responsibility to arrange all aspects of the work directly with you.

These works will be disruptive and will require your co-operation to complete in a timely fashion, and to the standard that you expect.

We expect the contractor to be polite and to treat you with respect at all times, and for you to show him the same courtesy.

Our contractors will have identification cards so always check these before allowing access.

Keep children and pets away from work areas at all times and do not touch tools, equipment or materials.

Make sure that someone over 16 is present at all times during the works.

Our surveyor will call on you during the works to check the progress of the work, and to deal with any queries you may have. When the works are complete, the contractor will ask you to sign a Satisfaction Note to confirm that you are happy with the works, and that your home has been left in a satisfactory condition. Once all the work is complete, our surveyor will carry out a final inspection of the work, and pass any defects to the contractor to rectify.

After the works have finished:

The contractor guarantees the work for 12 months from the date of completion, so we will pass any defects that arise during this period to them to resolve. If you happen to experience any problems after this period, these should be reported as a normal repair to our **Repairs Team on 01233 330366**.

Our surveyor may visit you towards the end of the guarantee period to inspect the property to ensure that the contractor has rectified any defects reported to him.

Frequently Asked Questions:

“Why do I need an asbestos survey?”

A survey may not be necessary for properties built after the year 2000. In all other cases, and in order to comply with Health and Safety legislation, we have to provide the contractor with a recent, detailed and extensive report. We also take advantage of the surveyor's attendance at the property to undertake a survey of the rest of your home.

“Do I have to have work done?”

Yes, except in exceptional circumstances where it may be prejudicial to registered occupants health. These works are important part of maintaining the Councils' property in terms of insulation, security and appearance. We will not undertake partial replacement works, i.e. just some windows or doors, etc.

“Will my rent go up if I have this work carried out?”

No, this type of work will not affect the level of rent that you pay.

“What will I get a choice of?”

Unfortunately, there are not many options available for this type of work and those that are (coloured frames, different handles, Georgian bars etc.) are considerably more expensive, and therefore not a possibility. These options may also require planning permission. However, cat flaps may be available on request.

“Can I Have A Patio Door?”

Residents frequently ask for the living room window to be altered to a patio door. Unfortunately, this is not an option we offer as it is both expensive and each room must also have an opening window. Even if there is a second window within the room, we also have to be mindful of usable space. If you are prepared to pay for it, and subject to obtaining the relevant consents, residents are free to pursue this option themselves as a tenants alteration. We will replace original patio doors to match existing.

“Can I have something different if I supply it?”

The Council has to ensure that the windows and doors it installs all meet current standards, fit in with our maintenance provisions and are sustainable. Changes to the specification can cause issues with the contract so generally the answer is no. However, you can discuss your thoughts with the surveyor and we will consider them. If you do wish to provide something different, please inform us early on in the process so that we have plenty of time to make changes if we agree.

“How long will the work take to complete?”

This will depend on the number of windows and doors that are to be replaced but, generally, takes two to three days. It may take a bit longer if there is a lot of defective plastering or damp proofing to remedy.

“Are Safety Restrictors Fitted to Windows?”

Safety restrictors will be fitted to all first floor windows, or above, and will limit the opening of windows to 100mm. However, please note that you will be able to override restrictors so that windows can be opened further to their full extent.

“Can I Have A Cat Flap?”

We will fit cat flaps where we can in rear, or side, doors for those who request them. Cat flaps will only be fitted into loose panels that can be replaced at a later date and are therefore not suitable for composite doors, i.e. they will only be fitted into UPVC doors. Please let the contractor's surveyor know that you would like one when he undertakes the survey of your home.

“Do I Have To Be At home?”

Yes, an adult (16 or over) must be present at all times

“Do I Have To Provide My Contact Details?”

We will provide the contractor with your contact details from our records in accordance with the personal data agreement we have with you as your landlord. The contractor will delete all records once the purpose has been served and no later than practical completion of the contract. However, it would be very helpful if you would supplement these with any new numbers, email details etc. that you may have obtained since providing them to us. Whether or not you choose to provide these is your decision and totally at your discretion.

“What Happens If I Miss An Appointment?”

Missed appointments can be both costly and terribly inconvenient for either parties. We like to promote mutual respect and consideration for all involved. So if there is a genuine reason or emergency that means you cannot keep an appointment please let the other person know as they will be obliged to do the same for you.

If the reason for not providing access when agreed is repetitive and unreasonable, we may look to recover costs from you or ultimately use the Courts to gain access to our property in accordance with your tenancy agreement.

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