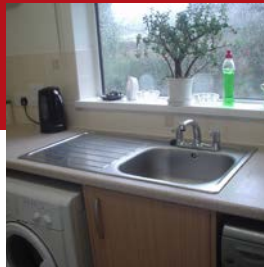




A guide to Kitchen Refurbishment

What you need to know...



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

The information contained in this booklet is designed to help you to understand Ashford Borough Council's kitchen refurbishment scheme.

Please note:

The council is not obliged to undertake refurbishment works in any property. If there are any anti-social behaviour orders registered at a particular property or the council has a serious issue with the tenancy at a particular property, such as rent arrears, then it may remove that property from the schedule.

Introduction

Ashford Borough Council currently refurbishes and modernises approximately 150 kitchens a year. The council's kitchen refurbishment scheme includes a consultation service and our surveyor will visit you at home to discuss your requirements and the options available to you. The Council will only modernise a kitchen if on inspection it is felt there is a genuine need for the work.

If you have any special needs please let us know by completing the attached form, and we will try to accommodate them.

What's included in a kitchen refurbishment ?

Generally, the refurbishment will include:

- Replacement of kitchen units and worktops
- New glazed wall tiling
- New floor covering
- Decorations, including the ceiling and fitting of coving
- Alterations to plumbing and gas pipes if required
- Upgrade and repositioning of electrical sockets and switches (if required)
- Installation of new lighting and extractor fan (if required)

The layout of the new kitchen will be discussed with you and we will try to accommodate your requests as far as reasonably practical, so long as they fit in with the council's kitchen design

brief. The new design must allow a space for a cooker, washing machine and tall fridge/freezer. If you do not already have these appliances, a standard size/space (640mm) must be allowed for in the new design/kitchen layout.

The council installs good quality modular kitchen units with laminated worktops. These units are superior to the majority of existing units and are 600mm deep.

The units come in a large number of sizes which allows the kitchen designer to make the most of the kitchen space we have to work with. You will be asked to select your choices from a range of units, worktops, glazed wall tiles, flooring and wall finishes.



What happens and when?

Before the works:

An asbestos survey is essential for these works to proceed. As well as inspecting the kitchen the asbestos surveyor will be asked to look at all the other rooms.

An appointment will be made with you to have a survey of the kitchen carried out. Our surveyor will be accompanied by an independent kitchen designer if it is decided the kitchen would benefit from the work.

During this visit the kitchen designer will measure up the kitchen and ask you to confirm which appliances you would like incorporated in the kitchen. The designer will ask if you are planning to buy any additional appliances or replace any existing ones. We will also ask if you have any special requests for the layout or design of the new kitchen. Our surveyor will show you all the samples and ask you to make your selection from the given options. You will be asked to sign a form confirming the choices you have made. The designer will show you a computerised plan of the new kitchen layout for your approval.

A computer generated drawing with coloured 3D elevations will be sent to you confirming the new proposed layout and give you an impression of what it will look like. We will also send you a copy of your selected options. **This will be your last opportunity to change the plans or revise your selection before the kitchen goes into production.**

A second visit will be undertaken by our surveyor. The purpose of this visit is to deal with finer details such as the location of new power points, light switches, etc. and discuss any alteration work to be done.

Once we have appointed a contractor we will write to you giving details and contact numbers for the contractor. The contractor will then call on you to introduce themselves, and will agree a start date with you, usually giving at least seven days notice.



During the Works:

Please appreciate that this is a full kitchen refurbishment and these works will be disruptive and your co-operation is essential. The kitchen will become a work area and you will not be able to access it while operatives are working.

The contractor will liaise with you directly to arrange access times to carry out the various phases of the work. Because work will be carried out to a number of properties all at the same time there will be times when no work is carried out to your property. It is anticipated that the entire job will take no longer than three working weeks to complete.

The kitchen contents will need to be packed away and relocated outside the kitchen to allow works to proceed.

The following page provides a broad outline of what happens during the work, and when. The timings stated are dependent on the size of the kitchen and the scope of work. If more work is required in a kitchen then these timings may vary. It is the contractor's responsibility to organise all aspects of the work directly with you.

Week 1	
Removal of existing kitchen (dustiest day)	All white goods to be removed except oven. Existing sink unit left in until day three
Electrics (noisiest day) - Electrical first fix	Power will be turned off for approx: two to three hours
Plumbing and units - Installation of new sink and base unit	Water will be turned off for approx: two to three hours
Making good - Boxing in of pipes, make good to electrical chases, wall preparation	
Ceiling preparation - Re-plastering ceiling and fitting of coving	
Week 2	
Ceiling - Completion of ceiling works	
Installation of kitchen - Fitting of remainder of base and wall units, all worktops, and any skirting or architraves that require renewal	
Week 3	
Decoration - Fitting of glazed wall tiles and decoration works	
Week 4	
Fitting and installation of floor tiles and plinths. Electrical second fix, including fitting of extractor fan and lighting	



Our surveyor will call on you regularly 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 check of the work, and pass any defects to the contractor to rectify.

A satisfaction survey will be sent to you by the council asking for feedback. The results of these surveys are very helpful to us as it helps us to improve the service.



After the works have finished:

The contractor guarantees the work for 12 months from the date they are completed, so any defects that arise during this period will be passed 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 0300 003 0711**.

At the end of the guarantee period, our surveyor may visit you to inspect the kitchen one last time. This will be to ensure that any defects reported to the contractor have been rectified and to identify any that you may have missed or not noticed.



Frequently Asked Questions:

“Why do I need an asbestos survey?”

If your property was built after 2000 a survey may not be needed. In all other cases we have to provide a recent, detailed, extensive survey to the contractor for Health & Safety reasons. Whilst in the property we have other rooms inspected on a more visual basis because the opportunity is there at little extra cost to update our records.

“Do I have to have work done?”

No, it is your choice. We are offering to refurbish the kitchen, but if you are happy with what you currently have, or do not want the disruption, you do not have to have the work done. We will not undertake partial refurbishment works, i.e. just decorating or just flooring, etc.

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

No, there is no additional charge to your rent for having this work carried out.

“What will I get a choice of?”

You will be able to choose from a selection of:

- Kitchen unit door and drawer fronts
- Worktops
- Wall tiles
- Floor tiles
- Patterns of embossed wall paper
- Colour of emulsion for the walls

You will also be able to input into the design and layout of the new kitchen.

Frequently Asked Questions cont:

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

You are able to supply your own:

- Wall tiles so long as they are 148x148mm or 200mm x 100mm. We will supply the adhesive and white grout
- Light fitting so long as it is suitable for a kitchen (*we will only fit one single point light fitting surface mounted, i.e. no recessed lights*)

In any case we may ask you to pay any additional cost we incur as a result of installing or fixing your own goods.

“If I want to buy new appliances, will you incorporate them into the new design?”

Yes, if you tell us at the time the design is being prepared, we will incorporate items if possible (excludes inset hobs and built in ovens). However, the council has minimum standards in terms of storage and worktop space and must comply with the design brief. Too many appliances in a kitchen may compromise this and be unacceptable. We have to avoid making kitchen designs too ‘unique’ as we have to consider possible future tenant needs and avoid the expense of later conversions.

“Is there a limit on the number of units that I can have?”

We will provide and install as many units as required to satisfy the design brief in accordance with the size of the accommodation. In addition there is a financial limit on the cost of the units imposed on the designer.

Within these constraints the council and the kitchen designer will aim to fully fit out the kitchen. However, if you do require more units than we will supply, you will be able to purchase these yourself through the contractor who will fit them all at the same time.

You must inform us if you would like to take this option and at the latest within one week of receiving your plans.

The conditions of such an arrangement will be that payment must be made in full in advance, and that the units become part of the whole fitted kitchen and are left in-situ if you left the property.

Please note: If you elect to supply your own goods or buy additional units, we will review your rent account to determine if it is appropriate before giving its approval.

“How long will the work take to complete?”

Generally, we ask you to allow four weeks to complete the works. If there is a lot of defective plastering or damp proofing to remedy etc., then it may take a bit longer.

Will I still be able to use my cooker and sink whilst the work is being carried out?”

The contractor will organise the work to ensure that a kitchen sink can be used at the end of each and every day. If the cooker is going to be relocated it maybe a day or so before the new cooker circuit is re-connected. We would expect tenants to accommodate minor disruptions like this. We will not provide temporary cooking facilities, nor will we reimburse tenants for take-away meals.

Obviously whilst works are in progress there will be times during the day when these facilities and some of the services (water/electricity) are unavailable or disconnected. If temporary unavailability or services disconnection during the day is likely to cause problems, this can be discussed with our surveyor to seek a solution.





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