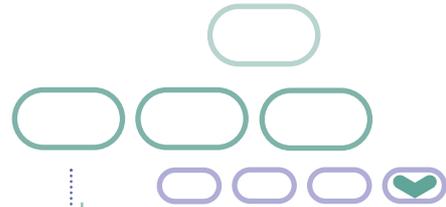


your new

Kitchen



A practical guide
to getting your
new kitchen fitted



Having a new kitchen installed is a major improvement to your home. But there is no doubt that it involves a lot of work and can be a big upheaval.

You should read this leaflet before you fill in the form asking for details about you and your existing kitchen. Please keep the leaflet until your kitchen is done - you may want to refer to it again.

Will I be **consulted** on the **layout** of the kitchen?

Yes, someone will call at your home to survey the kitchen and note what appliances you have. If there is anything you particularly want for the kitchen, please discuss this with the surveyor. We will try to give you at least as much cupboard space as you already have. **You must let us know if you are planning to buy any new appliances so that we can make room for them in the kitchen.**

Larders and built-in cupboards will normally be removed where the walls are not important to the stability of the house. Hot water cylinders in kitchens will not generally be moved. Where possible however, we will build around these so that they blend into the new kitchen. Gas meters located in kitchen cupboards can, in most cases, be moved outside.

A plan showing the kitchen layout will be drawn and you will receive a letter asking you to call into the office to go over the plans.

If there is anything you are not happy about you must tell us then. We will try to take your wishes into account where possible but if not, we will explain why. You will be asked to sign a copy of the plan once you are happy with the layout and a copy of this will be posted to you. You will then have ten days to consider the layout further - after this period **no changes can be made** as the drawings will be passed to the contractor for the kitchens to be ordered.

››› Do I get to **pick** my kitchen?

You will be able to choose from a range of kitchen units and worktops, ceramic wall tiles between worktops and wall units and behind the cooker and vinyl floor tiles. The contractor cannot fit different materials purchased by the tenant. Both wall tiles and flooring become the tenant's responsibility once fitted.

Please make sure you are happy with the choices you have made. Once these are passed to the company fitting the kitchen, changes cannot be made.

▮ Can I buy **additional units** myself?

Yes, you can. Details of the kitchen supplier will be given to you so you can contact them direct. You will have to make your own arrangements for payment and fitting of the units - this cannot be done as part of the Council's work.

▮ What if I find it **difficult to use** standard kitchen **fitments**?

There are some changes we can make to help people use the kitchen more easily - wall units can be lowered to make them easier to reach and longer lever taps which are easier to grip can be fitted. In some cases, we can arrange for an occupational therapist to visit to look at how difficulties can be overcome.





When will the work start?

We have to survey the kitchen and draw the plans well ahead of the work starting, so this is done several months before the kitchen is actually fitted. We will try to give you an idea of when the work will be done but this can change. Groups of kitchens to be replaced are put into contracts, and you will get a letter once we know when your **contract** is to start, but the contractor will give you 5 working days notice of when they intend to begin work in **your** house.

How long will it take?

It is important that the workmen have access to your home when required. Your kitchen should be fitted within 10 working days, although it may not be 10 days in a row. It may take longer if there is a lot of disruption caused by walls being removed. If the decoration is being done for you, this will follow on once the kitchen is completed. If you have holidays planned when the work is due to take place, please let us know and we can re-arrange the work. Work is usually carried out between 8am and 4pm on weekdays, but sometimes work outwith these hours is agreed with the tenant.

What is involved?

Many different trades are involved - joiners, electricians, plumbers, plasterers, tilers and decorators. Once the new units are fitted, the workmen may only need to work in your kitchen for short periods rather than a whole day. The contractor should keep you informed of when tradesmen will to be working in your home, but it can sometimes be difficult to be specific, because they are working in several houses at once.

For safety reasons, tenants cannot be allowed in the kitchen while work is being carried out.



be prepared

what is involved?



On the first day of the work, the contractor will disconnect and move your appliances. These have to be stored out of the kitchen while the work is being done. We will try to leave you with cooking facilities and mains supply water (sometimes available from the bathroom tap) at the end of each working day, but this is not always possible. If not, the contractor will leave bottled water for you, and leave temporary cooking facilities overnight. The old kitchen is taken out and the new one installed over the first couple of days. Because of the disruption this causes, many people make other arrangements for their meals over this period. It is normally a couple of days before washing machines can be plumbed back in.



New electrical wiring is fitted in the kitchen as part of the replacement. Because this is more sensitive, older appliances (such as electric cookers) may not work properly when refitted. Problems can occur with older gas cookers too, as they may not pass the safety checks we have to carry out. If a fault is found when your cooker is being installed in your new kitchen, it will NOT be reconnected - it is against safety regulations. It will be your responsibility to have it repaired or replaced.

Where possible, a hole will be bored in the outside wall to vent tumble dryers. We will fit a grill on the outside, and will fit the tenant's **own**



venting kit for the inside **as long as it is available when the workmen are in the house.**

We will also install, where possible, an extractor fan (*if you do not already have one*). This is important since it helps to reduce problems of condensation and dampness and only costs around £10 per year to run.





Improving Home Safety

We will install a fire blanket, carbon monoxide detector (*if you have gas or solid fuel in the house*) and a new smoke detector if one is needed.

An electrical wiring inspection will be carried out before the kitchen is fitted and, where possible, any repairs will be carried out when the kitchen is replaced. Otherwise, the Local Housing Office will make alternative arrangements to have the repairs done.

What do I need to do to **prepare** for the work?

You will need to empty your kitchen cupboards before the work starts. You should also remove any fixed items such as shelving, clocks etc. and replace them when the work is finished. If you are elderly or have a disability and require help, please contact us as we can arrange for someone to help you.

Workmen will need access to the fusebox, so you will need to make sure the area around this is clear. It may also be necessary for work to be carried out in other rooms in your house.

If you have wooden panelling which you want to keep, you will need to take this down yourself, and refit it afterwards. Please remember that units and sockets will probably be in a different position.

A word about **flooring**

Many tenants have fitted laminate flooring and ceramic floor tiles in their homes, which can cause problems when a new kitchen is put in. It is unlikely that we will be able to fit the kitchen without damaging these floors. We can sometimes try to work around existing flooring but the contractor cannot take responsibility for any damage caused. The workmen will not lift laminate flooring.

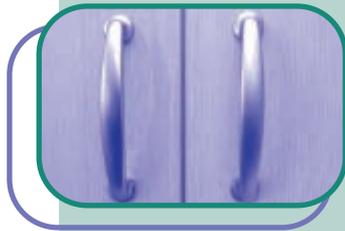
Floor coverings can cause problems in other rooms too, because access is often needed under the floorboards for electrical or plumbing work. Please let us know on your form if you have ceramic tiles or laminate flooring.

The workmen will be careful when lifting and replacing carpets and underlay but can have particular problems with foam backed carpets. They cannot take responsibility for problems caused by crumbling foam.



What if I prefer to **keep** my **existing** kitchen?

You can - just let us know.
Safety features will still be
fitted and the electrical
inspection carried out.



What about **decoration**?

The kitchen will be left ready for you to decorate - wallpaper will be stripped and existing artex which has been damaged in the installation either patched or plastered over. (*Issues over asbestos in older artex are covered in a separate sheet*). A decoration allowance of up to £60 may be paid - this will be available for you at your local office, once the finished kitchen has been inspected by the Clerk of Works. Any allowance will be credited to your rent account if you have arrears outstanding. Check with the local office once work is complete.

If you are of pensionable age, or in receipt of a disability benefit (*the letter sent separately gives more details of qualifying benefits*), you can have the decoration done for you. The contractor will offer you a selection of wallpapers to choose from, but cannot hang different wallpaper purchased by tenants.

Who will carry out the work?

The work will be carried out by a contractor approved by the Council. Each employee will carry an official identity card. If you are unsure of anyone's identity DO NOT let them into your home. Contact the Contracts Helpline on 01786 432027 to check identification.

contracts helpline
01786 432027

What standard of **customer care** can I expect?

We have agreed service standards with the contractor. They are part of our guarantee to you, our customer. If the contractor fails in any of these standards we want you to tell us about it.

The contractor's employees will:

- act courteously
- dress appropriately
- carry identification
- explain what work is being done and why
- give their supervisor's name, if requested, and how to contact them
- give the Council supervisor's name, if requested, and how to contact them
- move furniture to allow work to be carried out and replace it when work is completed
- leave your house in a wind and watertight condition at the end of each working day
- remove all debris from your house and surrounding area at the end of each working day
- vacuum clean when work is completed
- ensure you have cooking facilities and a water supply at the end of each working day
- use clean dust sheets to protect soft furnishings and fittings



What if I have a **problem** with the new kitchen?

We hope you won't - most tenants are very happy with the work. If you do have a problem or complaint, contact the **Contracts Helpline** on **01786 432027** or the **Housing Projects team** on **01786 442456**.

If an **urgent problem** occurs out of office hours, contact the Council's **emergency** number on **01786 472757**.

our standards