

organising repairs to your building

For Home Owners and the Private Rented Sector



ORGANISING REPAIRS TO YOUR BUILDING

If you have identified that you need to carry out repairs from your own observation or a professional survey the first thing you need to do is get a professional opinion on the work involved and the cost.

If the problem is straightforward you may feel confident enough to find and appoint your own tradesman. If it is complicated, big or you are not sure what is causing the problem you may want to employ someone to manage the work.

GETTING PROFESSIONAL HELP

An architect, surveyor or engineer can look at the problem and advise you what work needs to be done. They can also organise and check quotes for you and then supervise the work. The Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland and Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors can give you details of architects and surveyors. To find the one that suits you best approach two or three and ask:

- what experience they have of doing similar work
- who will manage the work
- what is the cost and what does it include
- when can they start

Using an architect, surveyor or engineer may cost more but you may get better value for your money, better quality work that will last longer and less hassle.

SCHEDULE OF WORK AND SPECIFYING MATERIALS AND METHODS TO BE USED

If you are employing someone to manage the work they will do this for you. If you are doing it yourself you can refer to publications such as the **Tenement Handbook**. The Council's Private Sector Housing Team may also be able to provide assistance through their Scheme of Assistance.

FINDING A TRADESMAN

You should get two or three quotes based on your schedule of work and specifications.

There are some important questions to ask when getting quotes:

- do they have experience of this type of work
- do they belong to a reputable trade organisation, and does it offer any guarantee and/or a complaints service
- do they have proof of indemnity insurance
- can they provide references/details of past clients who you can contact to discuss the contractors performance
- are they VAT registered, if not they are likely to be a small business and may not be able to handle big jobs
- can they provide examples of similar jobs undertaken locally which could be viewed

AGREEING A PRICE

Ask for a list of works and detailed written quotations, not estimates. A quotation is a price that the builder must stick to (unless you agree to more work being carried out). If it is detailed, you can compare like with like. Check if the price includes VAT.

GET IT IN WRITING

If you are employing a tradesman yourself you will need to set out the working arrangements in writing.

Agree in advance:

- the price is fixed and only to be increased if agreed with you in writing beforehand
- you will retain 5% of the cost for six months after completion (to be used to pay for defects if the builder does not return to sort them), if there are no defects or the builder fixes any defects then the money will be paid
- a start and finish date only to be exceeded for factors beyond the builders control
- who will be their main site supervisor
- who will give instructions on your part
- who you can make complaints to
- that tradesmen will respect health and safety regulations and only use the materials specified in the quotation
- that the builder will get all consents (eg building warrants, consent to site a skip in the road, scaffolding permits etc)
- which areas of the site are not to be used for building works or storage (and get these marked off with tape)
- whether they will need access to water, toilets or electricity
- levels of cleanliness expected and arrangements for reinstatement of any damage caused during the work.

BEFORE WORK STARTS

Access - You should make sure that anyone whose property will need to be accessed for the work is aware of this and they have given permission, for example a neighbouring flat in a shared block or the garden of an adjacent property.

Security - You or your neighbours may need to give workmen access to your home to carry out work. You should consider putting valuables in a locked room where access is not required or having a trusted person present during the works. When a scaffold is erected access to upper floors will become possible, are your windows locked? Insurance policies may require notification of when scaffolding is erected.

REPAIRS TO COMMON PROPERTY

If you live in a shared building you will need to work with your neighbours at all stages of the repairs. The leaflets **Building Maintenance** and **Common Repair** explain how you should get organised.

FURTHER INFORMATION

PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING TEAM

For advice on improving, repairing and maintaining your building.

Galashiels Area Office | Paton Street | Galashiels | TD1 3AS

tel: 01896 661393

[email: housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk](mailto:housingenquiries@scotborders.gov.uk)

BORDERS CARE & REPAIR

For advice and help on disabled adaptations and for older people on all aspects of repairing and maintaining your home.

The Weaving Shed | Ettrick Mill | Dunsdale Road | SELKIRK
TD7 5EB.

tel: 01750 724895

[email: enquiries@borderscareandrepair.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@borderscareandrepair.org.uk)

Acknowledgement

SBC acknowledges having used information provided by the City of Edinburgh Council's Homeworks Service in the production of this guidance.

NOTES

You can get this document on tape, in large print, and various other formats by contacting us at the address below. In addition, contact the address below for information on language translations, additional copies, or to arrange for an officer to meet with you to explain any areas of the publication that you would like clarified.

HOUSING STRATEGY TEAM

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