

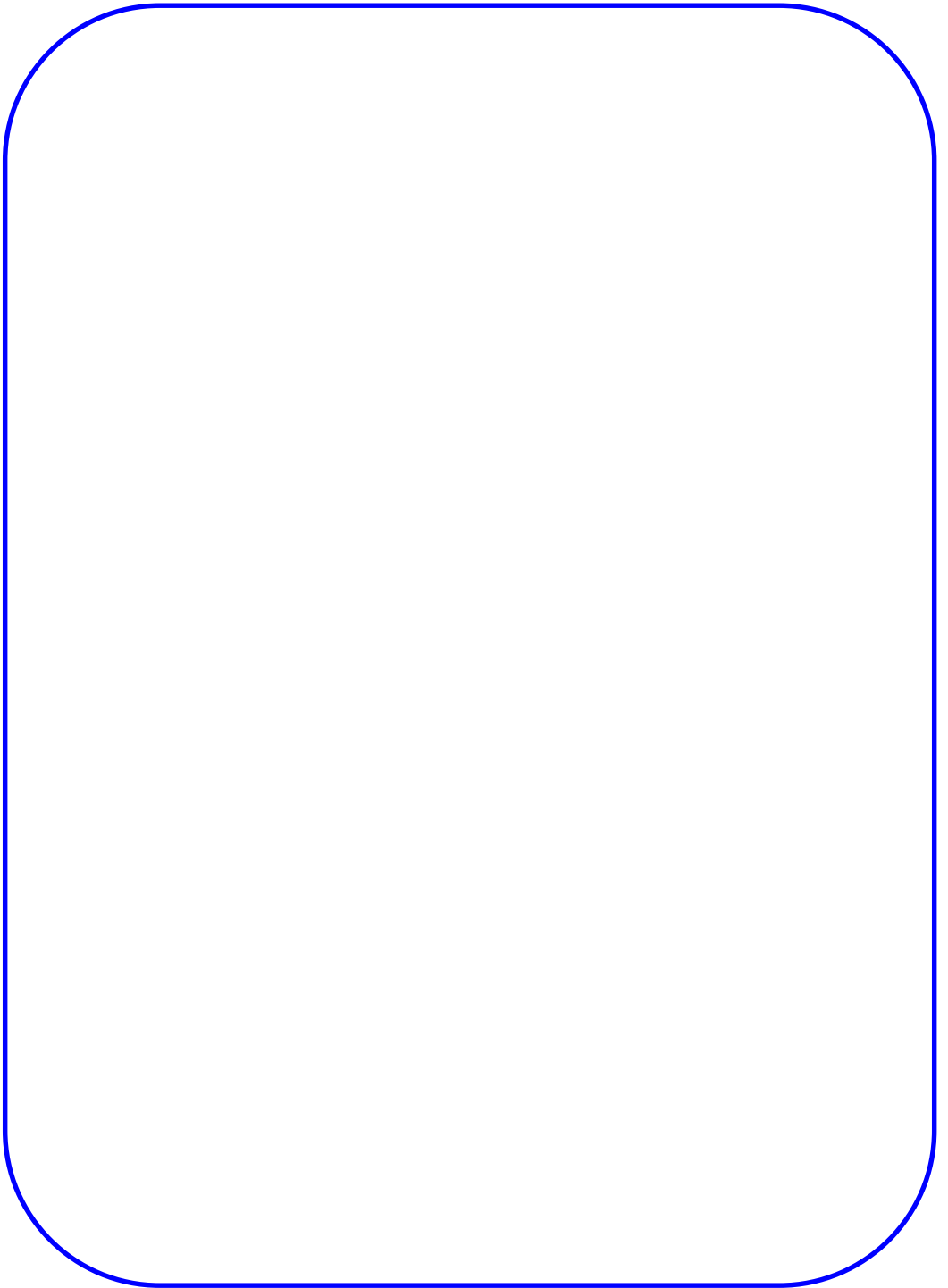


Council Housing Services Improvements

This leaflet tells you about:

- The capital programme
- Improvements by the council
- Carrying out your own improvements
- Compensation for improvements





The Capital Programme

What is it?

Each year, usually in March, the council makes a decision about what improvements and planned maintenance should be carried out on council estates.

How is it spent?

The District-Wide Tenants' Forum works with council housing officers to develop long-term priorities and is consulted on the programme for each year.

Do you want to get involved?

Have a look at our "**Getting Involved**" leaflet if you want to find out more about how tenants can get involved in decision making.

How do I know what is going to be done?

You will receive regular newsletters from us, which will tell you what the programme will be for the district in any given year. You can also get a copy of the ten-year improvement programme from the council housing office or download one from www.lancaster.gov.uk/repairs

Before we start work on an individual estate, we write to each tenant to let them know what work is planned, when they should be carried out and who to contact if they have any problems or want to find out more.

If we need access to your house a suitable time will be arranged with you in advance. All our staff and contractors carry identification, so you can make sure anyone you let into your home is bona-fide.

Improvements by the Council

Will I be consulted about work that will be carried out on my home?

The programme can include modernisation of kitchens or bathrooms. If improvements are planned to your home, you will be consulted first and the contract administrator will sit down with you and talk through the range of options on offer.

If any work that is carried out causes substantial damage to the existing décor, the council will offer a decorating allowance.

What is planned maintenance?

It is more economical and efficient for the council to replace windows, roofs, gutters and paint the outside of your home in a planned way. We don't wait for a tenant to tell us that their house needs new windows and do it as a one-off, we have a planned programme of major repairs and maintenance. This ensures that the properties on each estate are kept up to a good standard.

You will be informed in advance of any works that are to take place.

Carrying out your own Improvements

Do I need to obtain permission before I carry out improvements?

Tenants are usually welcome to improve homes themselves but you need to get written permission first. This is so that we can ensure that works you plan to carry out will not adversely affect the property. We can also let you know if there are any particular problems you will need to address. Please contact the council housing office who will be able to give you more information about how you apply for permission.

Do I need permission from anyone else?

For some improvements, you may need to satisfy buildings regulations and/or get planning permission. You should contact the council's planning service on (01524) 582376 who will be able to provide further advice.

Compensation for Improvements

Will I get compensation for the improvements I have carried out if I move out?

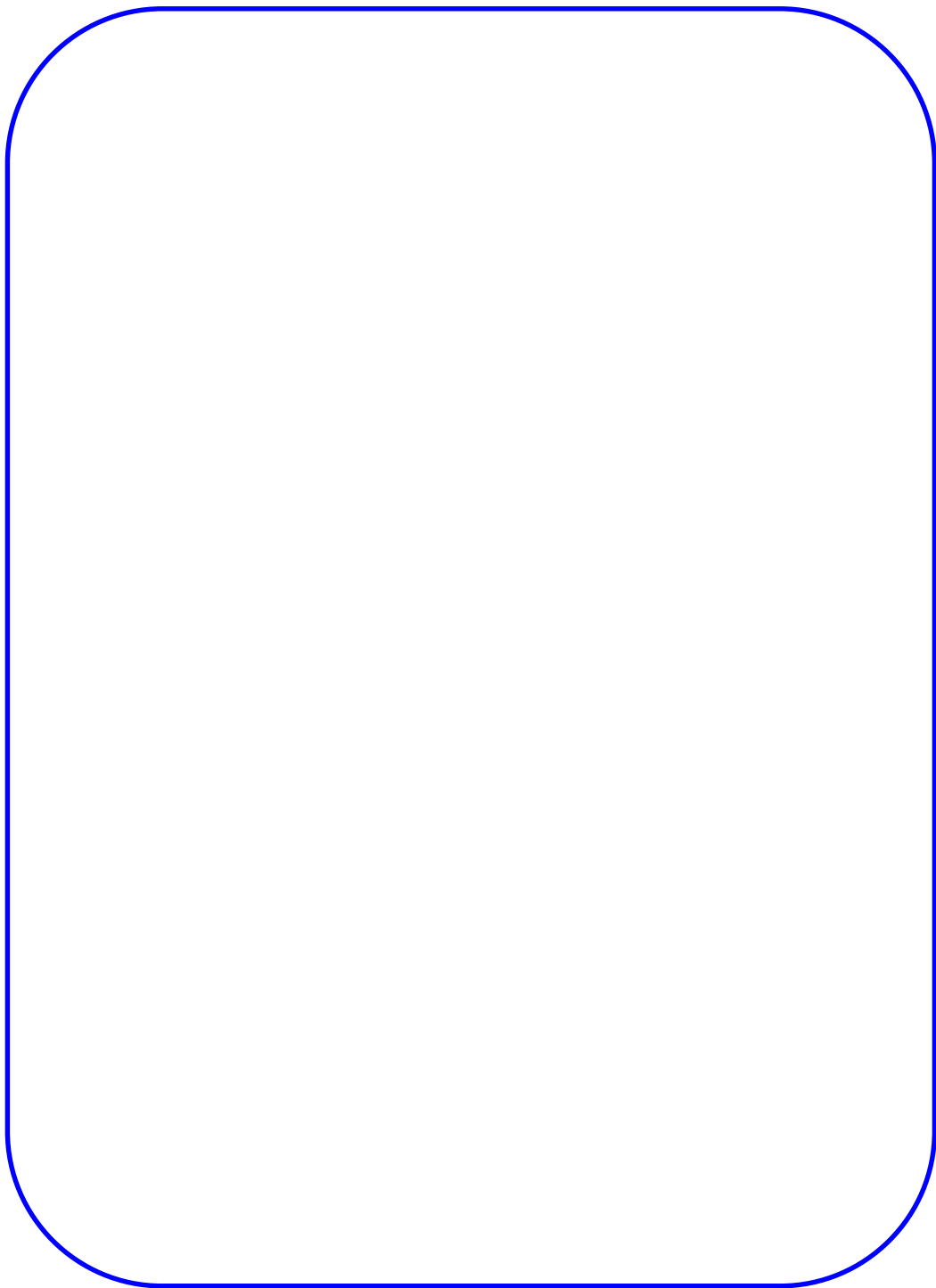
If you carry out works that significantly increase the value of your property, you may be eligible for compensation when you move out. When the maintenance inspector gives written permission for the works to be carried out, you will be informed whether the works will qualify and any paperwork you need to keep for when you claim.

Will I get compensation for the improvements I have carried out if I buy my home?

If you decide to buy your council property, you will not get compensation, as improvements you have carried out are not included in the purchase price.

How can I find out more?

You can get a copy of the Communities and Local Government leaflet “**A Better Deal for Tenants – You Right to Compensation for Improvements**” from the council housing office or you can download one from www.lancaster.gov.uk/repairs



Contact Information

Council Housing Services

Postal address:

PO Box 4, Town Hall, Dalton Square, Lancaster, LA1 1QR

Office:

38 Cable Street, Lancaster, LA1 1HH

Telephone:

01524 582929

Email:

councilhousing@lancaster.gov.uk

Website:

www.lancaster.gov.uk/councilhousing

Our office hours are 9am to 5pm weekdays
(10am to 5pm Wednesdays)

If there is an emergency when the office is closed,
ring the council's emergency call centre,
which is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

The number to call is: 01524 67099

Calls may be recorded to help improve
our standard of service and accuracy of information

This leaflet can be made available in
large print, on audio, in braille
and in other languages

LANCASTER
CITY COUNCIL

Promoting City, Coast & Countryside

Ref: A124/20080602