

# A guide to major works at your development



## What are 'major works'?



'Major works' is the term we use to describe large-scale or substantial building projects that are carried out to keep your development looking good and working correctly. This work is carried out as part of an ongoing maintenance programme.

**These projects are planned in advance and include things like:**

- Maintaining the main structure of the building. For example, looking after the roof and external walls.
- Maintaining and upgrading items within the building. For example, replacing lifts and upgrading fire alarms.
- Maintaining the decoration of the building. For example, painting the communal areas and protecting the outside of the building.
- Maintaining the building's systems. For example, maintaining the lifts and upgrading old communal heating systems.

Occasionally, major work also includes emergency work that cannot be planned for, such as repairing a major roof leak.

## How are major works paid for?



Each year, home owners pay into a Reserve Fund, through their service charge. This fund is money that is set aside, year-by-year, to pay for longer term maintenance for the development. We use this money to help pay for the development's major works projects.

### **What if the reserve fund doesn't cover the cost of the work?**

If the development's reserve fund won't cover the cost of the work, we write to home owners requesting an additional contribution. We do this as soon as we know what the additional costs are.

Major works projects vary in cost, but we will always make sure you know how much we are spending. If any home owner needs to contribute more than £250 (which is usually the case), we start a consultation process with all home owners. We are required to do this by law, in the case of leasehold, but also do so as a matter of good practice for freehold properties.

We will make sure everyone knows what is happening, when, and how much it will cost.

## How do we communicate with you on major works projects?



To ensure that the works run smoothly, and that we comply with legislation and best practice, we use a specific consultation and communication process. This means that you will know what is happening and what the next steps are.

This is called a 'Section 20' consultation. It is drawn from Section 20 of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1985. Because the Act lays down what we say, the language we use in the communications we send can often seem very formal and legal.

### The consultation process

The consultation process has five main steps:

1. **Notice of Intention (First Notice)**
2. **Statement and Notice of Estimates (Second Notice)**
3. **Notification of Reasons**
4. **Contractor Contact**
5. **Snagging**

#### 1. Notice of Intention



The First Notice you'll receive explains the works we propose to undertake, and how you can find out more. You can usually find a full description of the works through the 'My Account' section of our website, too. Just visit [www.FirstPort.co.uk](http://www.FirstPort.co.uk)

At this stage you can ask any questions, make comments and, if you wish, nominate a contractor.

#### What happens after the first notice?

After the first notice, we make a record of all your comments and ask a range of contractors to send us estimates for the work.

#### 2. Statement and Notice of Estimates

At this stage, we will send you the estimates we've received from contractors. We will also send you a summary of the comments we've had from other home owners together with our responses. If we receive an estimate from a contractor nominated by a home owner, this will also be included.

We will explain where you can view all the contractor estimates we received, and invite you to make comments on them.

We will consider all observations received, before making a decision of which contractor to appoint. We always take note of your observations before making a decision.

#### 3. Notification of Reasons



If we choose a contractor who isn't the cheapest, or is a selection made by a recognised Residents' Association nominee, we will send you a letter explaining why.

We will also write to let you know when the contractors will be starting the work.

#### 4. Contractor contact



During major works, contractors will often need to get in touch with you to arrange access. We ask the appointed contractor to give you as much notice as possible and minimise any disruption.

During this stage of the process, please let us know if you have any concerns or issues regarding access, or the work being carried out.

#### 5. Snagging



Once the works have been completed, we will check where possible that the work has been completed correctly. This stage is called 'snagging'. Payment for the work is retained until satisfactory completion is achieved.

During this stage we will write to you again, asking for your comments and if there are any problems we need to fix. We will pass any comments or problems on to the contractor and make sure they rectify any issues.

### We hope this gives you an overview of our major works process.

 [FirstPort.co.uk](http://FirstPort.co.uk)

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