



City of Westminster

GUIDE TO MAJOR WORKS PROJECTS



CONTENTS

Introduction	Page 1
Major works contractors	Page 1
Stages of major works project	Page 2-5
Leaseholder consultation and service charges	Page 5
Contact details	Page 5

Introduction

Major works projects are ‘large scale’ repairs such as window or roof replacements, fire safety work and communal decorations. The City Council is responsible for these works to maintain the common parts and fabric of the building.

Major works projects need a considerable amount of organising before they start. This document sets out what to expect at each stage of a major works project, including our commitments and how you can get involved.

Please note that the process described here, primarily relates to larger traditional major works projects delivered by our major works term contractors.

The process may differ for smaller projects delivered by one of our other contractors such as fire safety works or emergency lighting upgrades. This is because they may differ in size, in terms of budget or timescales, or the work may need to be done urgently.

Where this is the case, we will still consult with residents. This includes formal leaseholder consultation known as ‘Section 20’ consultation. Further details of this process are set out in the **Leaseholder Handbook** and **Major Works Service Charges Explained** document. For any queries please contact us, using the details on page 5.

Major works contractors

At the start of 2018, we entered into a ten-year partnering contract with two major works contractors to deliver major works– one in the north and one in the south of Westminster. The benefits of doing this include:

- Reducing costs associated with the procurement of major works.
- Helping to reduce internal project management fees to less than 12% per project. -
- Allowing us to give more reliable dates when works are likely to start.
- Enabling us to manage contractors more effectively.

In addition to the major works contractors, we also have contractors to carry out specialist work such as lift replacement, heating and hot water upgrades and electrical and mechanical work. Some projects will be done by these contractors.



The stages of a major works project

There are four key stages in the delivery of most major works projects:

1. Initial planning
2. Detailed design and approvals
3. Onsite work
4. End of works - completion

1 Initial planning

Major works projects are programmed up to five years in advance by our Asset Strategy Team. Works are programmed based on a range of factors including repairs history, age of the parts, time since the last major works, and health and safety requirements such as fire safety.

The outline programme of works is agreed every year and published on the Westminster City Council website.

In the 12 – 18 months prior to major works due, the Asset Strategy Team will carry out initial inspections and surveys to confirm the scope of works required. They will also prepare budget estimates for the work.

As this preparatory work is nearing completion, we will write to all residents to outline the proposed works and ask for feedback. Depending on the size of the project, an introductory residents' meeting may be held, and a project webpage set up.

This preparatory work will be used to produce a **Client Brief**, setting out the scope of work. Once approved it will be published on our website.

Our commitments at this stage:

- Produce and publish a programme of works.
- Introduce the project written update / resident meeting / website page.
- We will publish the project documents for you to view and to comment.

How you can help / get involved:

- Please look at our proposals and give us your feedback.
- Please provide access when we need to carry out any survey or tests.

2. Detailed design and approvals

Once the **Client Brief** is agreed it is formally issued to the major works contractor for the relevant area. The contractor is responsible for developing a detailed plan to deliver the works. The contractor will also provide their own cost estimates at this stage. This document is called the **Project Execution Plan**.

Following scrutiny and review of this document, we will give the contractor



permission to move forward with the final design details of the project. This will see surveys for things such as asbestos and lead carried out. Any ballots required will be carried out, as well as any planning approvals sought. At this stage the contractor will prepare a **Service Provider Proposal**. Once approved, we will publish the plan on our website.

Leaseholders will then be sent a **Section 20 Notice of Estimate**. The notice sets out the description and reasons for each aspect of the work. It will detail the project costs and estimated leaseholder liabilities. Leaseholders have 37 days to make written observations. At this stage we may offer 1-2-1 surgeries for leaseholders to meet and discuss the payment options available.

Once the detailed design is agreed and resident consultation completed, the contractor will receive a **commencement order** which allows them to get ready to start work onsite.

Before work starts, the contractor will write to you to introduce their onsite team, their contact details, and invite you to a meet the contractor event. This will give you an opportunity to meet the team and ask any questions about the works being carried out to your property or estate.

Our Commitments at this stage:

- We will discuss our proposals with you and consider any feedback.
- We publish the project documents for you to review and to comment on.
- We will consult with leaseholders via a Section 20 Notice of Estimate.
- We will set out the planned timescales for the work and keep you updated.
- Where there is a choice, for example colour choices, we will ask your views.
- If we ballot we will tell you about the likely difference in cost between options.
- We may arrange pilot works for things like windows or show you samples.
- We will introduce the contractor's onsite team before work starts.

How you can help / get involved:

- Please look at our proposals and give us your feedback.
- Leaseholders should check the information they receive and make any formal observations to the Section 20 Notice of Estimate.
- Carefully consider any options presented and choose the one you like most.
- Please provide access when we need to carry out any survey or tests.

3. Onsite work

Once onsite, the contractor is responsible for all aspects of work, from delivery, quality and communication with residents. Any issues or queries about the work, should be referred to the contractor in the first instance.

All projects will have a dedicated resident liaison officer, who will be responsible for keeping residents updated and informed throughout.



You can also contact the City Council if you would like to raise any queries via our customer services team at 0800 358 3783 or housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk

Commitments at this stage:

- We will make sure you have the details of the key people working on the project.
- You will know how to contact the contractor with a question or complaint.
- We will give you a programme of works and timescales.
- We will tell you how the works that are taking place might affect you, for example, noise, lifts not being available, restricted access to the block etc.
- You will be updated on progress and any delays will be explained to you, for example, bad weather, severe congestion, illness etc.
- We will monitor the works to ensure the right standards are being delivered and work is being carried out safely.
- We will ensure that the contractor's operatives work to a standard code of conduct and respect your home.

How you can help / get involved:

- Please provide access to your property to allow works to be completed.
- Please contact the contractor or us if you have any concerns so that we can help.
- Please let either the contractor or the council know if you have any queries.
- Be aware of health and safety and security, particularly where scaffold is in use.
- You may be contacted for a satisfaction survey, please share your views on the contractor's onsite performance.

4. End of works - completion

Once the works are complete and approved by Westminster City Council, we will write to confirm the project is moving into the 12-month defects period.

The defects period means that any issues that occur with the works during the next 12 months, can be referred back to the contractor to address at no additional cost.

The nature of the defect reported will affect how quickly this is attended to. If there is a roof leak to a new roof for example, we will call the contractor back as soon as possible. If the issue relates to something like failing paintwork however, we will log this and pick this up at the end of the defect period.

Large items such as roof replacements and window replacements will come with specific manufacturer guarantees. Any issues with these items will be covered by those guarantees for a longer timeframe.

Any issues with major works should be reported via our customer services team at 0800 358 3783 or housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk



Our commitments at this stage:

- We will tell you when the project has been completed
- We will advise you when the 12 months ‘defects period’ starts and ends.
- We will tell you how to report any issues or concerns about the work.
- We will investigate any issues and arrange for the contractor to return if needed.
- We will keep you updated on the timescales for resolving concerns reported.

How you can help / get involved:

- Let us know if anything has not been completed or if there are any issues so we can investigate and, if required, ask the contractor to fix it.
- You may be contacted to complete a satisfaction survey, please share your views on the overall project – planning, communication, standard of work and the contractor’s performance.

Leaseholder consultation and service charges

There is a separate guide for leaseholders which covers specific leaseholder issues. The guide is called **Major Works Service Charges Explained** and covers:

- Major works service charges.
- Section 20 consultation.
- Payment options.
- Borrowing money to pay your bill.

Contact details

Westminster City Council Housing	In the first instance if you have any queries about your property or lease, contact us on: Telephone: 0800 358 3783 Email: housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk Website: www.westminster.gov.uk/housing
Compliments, comments or complaints	If you have any comments or complaints about our service, please contact Westminster City Council’s Complaints Team W: www.westminster.gov.uk/housing