



Laying hard wood flooring

How to obtain
permission



City of Westminster

If you are a Westminster City Council tenant and want to lay a hard wood floor finish such as laminate or hardwood overlay or ceramic tiles you must now get our permission first.

Removing carpet in your home and replacing it with a hard wood floor finish could have serious implications for your neighbour below you. The level of noise transmission could rise dramatically and cause a great deal of distress.

To minimise this if you want to take up carpets and replace them with a hard wood floor finish such as laminate or hardwood overlay or ceramic tiles. We will only give permission if you install an approved high quality underlay to our satisfaction.

- What you need to do

You must write to Westminster City Council using the attached form explaining your proposals in full. Please do not start work until you have our written permission. At the end of this leaflet is a step by step guide to installing underlay. It must be of a standard that minimises transmitted noise impact and installed correctly as per the step by step guide. If you are a leaseholder please discuss your proposals with the lessee operations team.

- What are the advantages of underlay?

A good quality underlay will reduce noise and vibration felt in your neighbour's home. It can also prolong the life of your floor and it's more comfortable to walk on. It will also mean the floor will be more resilient and will help reduce injuries to young children and the elderly if they fall.

- Things to remember

Installing underlay will go a long way to minimise any noise transmission to your neighbours. However you must be aware that if you install a hard wood, laminate or ceramic floor you will most likely cause some noise.

As well as underlay the level of noise transmission can be significantly reduced by placing rugs in the areas with the greatest level of traffic, for example the hallways, living room or where children play. Wearing soft-soled shoes will also help ensure that this is kept to a minimum.

- What happens if I get permission?

We will contact you to arrange an inspection during the course of the work.

- What if I cause noise nuisance?

Environmental Health can take action against you and you may be required to take up the flooring. In the case of tenants, your tenancy agreement states you must not do anything which causes, or is likely to cause, a nuisance, or annoy someone else. Leaseholders will have a similar clause in their lease. Breaking the terms of your tenancy agreement or lease could ultimately lead to enforcement action in court.

- What if I suffer from noise nuisance?

We can provide a mediation service to help you talk through the issues and suggest ways of improving the situation. In serious cases, as above, Environmental Health and/or your Village Manager may also be able to take further action.

- What happens if I don't get permission?

If you install such flooring without our written permission you may be asked to remove it and reinstate the original floor covering at your own expense. If you fail to remedy the situation yourself we will be entitled to recover reasonable costs from you for carrying out this work – either during or at the end of your tenancy.

- What happens if the Council needs to carry out repairs?

If you do lay this type of flooring please be aware that the Council may need to access the floor underneath to carry out repairs or inspections. If we give you permission we will ask that you lay the floor in a way that will allow it to be lifted in case this happens. We hope you will cooperate with us in such instances. We can however seek an injunction for the inspection or repair if necessary.

PLEASE NOTE that if we have to do repairs under your floor we will NOT be held liable for any damage to the flooring during this process. If we grant permission it will be conditional upon your acceptance of these terms.

Application to lay flooring

This form must be completed if you want to fit a hard wood floor finish such as laminate or hardwood overlay or ceramic tiles.

Your name:

Your address:

Telephone / email:

Areas/rooms where floor finish to be replaced:

Type of flooring proposed:

Declaration:

I undertake to install underlay to the satisfaction of Westminster City Council.

I will not proceed with the work until I have written permission from Westminster City Council.

I understand that Westminster City Council will not be liable for any damage to the floor in the course of carrying out its repairing obligations.

I undertake to re-instate the original floor covering if I move.

Your signature:

Date:

Please return the above form to the following address, for the attention of Westminster Housing. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Westminster City Council

Westminster City Hall, 64 Victoria Street, London, SW1E 6QP

T: 0800 358 3783 (freephone)

E: Housing.enquiries@westminster.gov.uk

W: www.westminster.gov.uk/housing

Twitter: [@wcchousing](https://twitter.com/wcchousing)