



Major works introduction

The planning and delivery of major works are essential features of property management.

Major works are 'large scale' repairs to a building or home. They need a considerable amount of organising before they take place. These works are different from more general repairs which are arranged when needed.

Part of the process of organising major works will involve looking at how they could impact on you and doing what we can do to minimise this.

Why do we carry out major works?

We want to make sure that the buildings and homes that we manage are kept in the best condition possible. We want to make sure that we keep you as safe as possible during the works and meet our legal responsibilities, in particular those concerning our duty to repair.

Carrying out major works in a planned way, rather than responding to communal repairs helps us make the best use of the money that is available.

Please note that when we carry out major works to your building we are repairing the building, rather than carrying out a restoration of the property.

How much does CityWest Homes spend on major works?

Each year we expect to spend about £30m to £40m on major works across Westminster. The exact amount we spend on major works any one year can vary depending on the number of projects we are managing and the type of work we are doing.

Some new developments - term contractor for major works

At the start of 2018, CityWest Homes entered into a ten-year partnering contract with two major works contractors. Axis Europe will deliver all major works projects in the north and west of the borough, while United Living will deliver all major works projects in the south and central areas of the borough.

The benefits of doing this include:

- Reducing costs associated with the procurement of works.
- Reducing the project management input required.
- Helping achieve our target of reducing our internal project management fees for delivering major works to an average of less than 12% per project.
- Allow us to give more reliable dates when works are likely to start.
- Enable us to manage contractors more effectively, especially when issues need to be escalated.

The stages of a major works project

There are four key stages that take place to develop and deliver each major works project.

1. Initial planning
2. Detailed design and approvals
3. Onsite
4. Completion

Initial planning

In the first instance, works are programmed up to five years in advance by our Asset Strategy team. Works are programmed based on a range of information, including repairs history, age of the asset, and length of time since the last major works.

The five year programme of major works is published on the CityWest Homes website.

In the 12 months prior to major works being scheduled, our Asset Strategy team will start preparatory work. They will carry out initial inspections and surveys to confirm the likely scope of works required. They will also prepare budget estimates for the work based on experience of costs on similar projects.

As this preparatory work is nearing completion, we will write to all residents affected to outline the proposed works and timetable. Depending on the size of the project, an introductory meeting may also be held for residents at this time.

This preparatory work will be used to produce a **client brief** which, once approved by CityWest Homes, will be published on our website.

For leaseholders, this initial planning phase will see us prepare our budget estimates for the work and enable us to share them with leaseholders much earlier than in the past.

In February we will send details of the how the major works will be billed including a frequently asked questions leaflet. In the April of the year we expect to start the major works, we will include our major works budget estimate costs with your service charge bill, together with the payment options.

This gives leaseholders the chance to start monthly instalments earlier if they wish to do so or defer payment until the Section 20 Notice, when the works start on site or after the works have completed at final account.

The calculation of the estimates will be based on the anticipated spend in each financial year. We will be taking the overall scheme budget and dividing it over the expected months of the project, using the projected site start and end dates of the works. Like your day to day service charge account the estimate will be adjusted each October when the actual costs are known.

Our commitments to you at this stage:

- Produce and publish a programme of works.
- Develop an on-line 'cost calculator' which will use our budgets to give leaseholders an idea of the cost of the major works.

Detailed design and approvals

Once the **client brief** is agreed by CityWest Homes it is formally issued to the major works contractor for that area. The contractor is then 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, CityWest Homes will issue a **pre-commencement order** giving 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 this is approved by CityWest Homes, we will publish the plan on our website. Leaseholders will then be sent a Section 20 Notice of Estimate. The notice will set out the description and reasons for each aspect of the works. It will detail the project costs, and estimated individual leaseholder liabilities. Leaseholders have 37 days to make written observations, to which we will give due regard. Depending on the size of leaseholder liabilities, we will offer 1-2-1 surgeries for leaseholders to meet and discuss the payment options available.

Once the detailed design is agreed by CityWest Homes, the contractor will receive a **commencement order** which allows them to begin mobilisation.

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

Our commitments to you at this stage:

- We will discuss our proposals with you and consider feedback before making a final decision.
- We will give you an opportunity to view the project documentation and comment on the content before works start.
- We will give you an indication of the timescales, tell you if they change and explain why.
- Where we can offer a choice we will ballot tenants and leaseholders to get your views. Examples include choosing paint colours, the style of a replacement window and/or door and floor coverings
- If we ballot you we will tell you about the likely difference in cost between the options on offer.
- We may arrange pilot works for things like windows when we are able to offer you a choice.
- We will give you the opportunity to meet the contractor's team who will work on your property.

What we need from you:

- Please look at our proposals and let us know if you have any questions or recommendations.
- Leaseholders should check the information they receive and note their rights.
- 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.

Onsite

Once on site, the contractor will be 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 instances.

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

As the works near completion, the contractor will invite residents to attend an end of works inspection with the site team to ensure all issues have been addressed.

Our commitments to you at this stage

- We will make sure you have the details of the key people who will be 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.
- CityWest Homes 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.

What we need from you

- Please provide access to your property to allow works.
- Please contact us if you have any concerns about things like your health, holidays etc. so that we can plan how to help you.
- Be extra vigilant about security, particularly when scaffolding has been put up and report any concerns.
- Let us know if anything has not been completed so that the contractor can deal with it before they leave site.

Completion

Once the works are complete and approved by CityWest Homes, 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 to rectify. If the issue relates to something like failing paint work 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 as normal.

Our commitments to you at this stage:

- We will tell you when the project has gone into the 'defects liability period' (need to check terminology)
- At the same time we will tell you how to report any issues that you have concerns about.
- We will investigate any concerns and arrange for the contractor to return and address anything that has been identified.
- We will keep you updated on the timescales for resolving any defects, in particular where specialists investigations are being carried out.