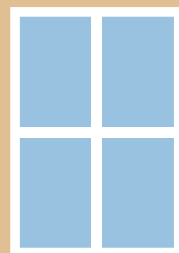
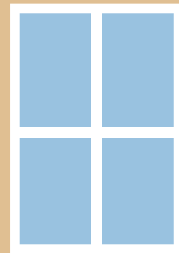
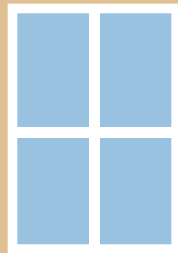
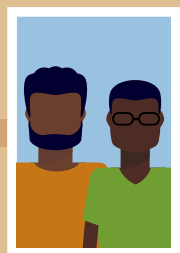
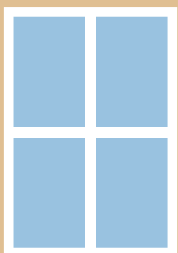
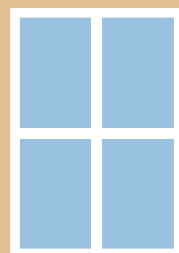
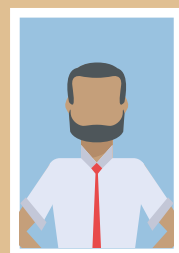
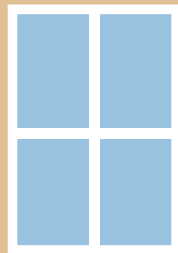
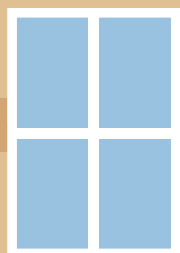
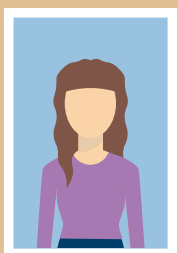
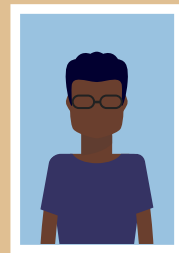
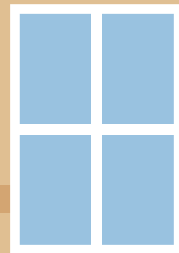
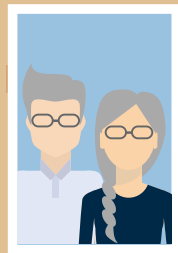
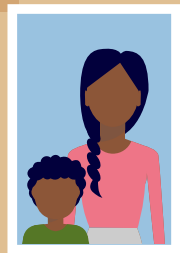
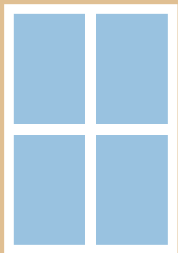


**Leaseholder  
Forum**

# Leasehold Forum questions and responses

July 2021



### **Would PCH consider buying my flat back?**

PCH does not currently have a policy for buying back Leasehold properties, however, this is potentially something that will be reviewed in the future so keep a check on the PCH website.

### **Are there any plans to install EV chargers on PCH estates?**

The installation of EV charges on PCH estates is something that we are very interested in exploring and forms a key part of PCH's commercial strategy which is currently being developed. We will update further as this progresses.

### **What is the percentage of stock owned by Leaseholders?**

Approximately 10% of PCH stock are Leasehold properties.

### **How much does a typical lease extension cost and how long can a lease be extended?**

You can add an extension of a maximum of 90 years.

Details can be found on the leasehold section of the PCH website: [www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/your-home/homeowners/leaseholders/lease-extensions/](http://www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/your-home/homeowners/leaseholders/lease-extensions/) or contact the Leasehold team for a copy to be sent to you.

Alternatively, you can find information on [www.lease-advice.org/](http://www.lease-advice.org/)

### **Why is the lease so short for ex-council flats? When should I ask for a lease extension and how much will it cost?**

Leases are assigned from previous owners so remaining years will vary for all properties depending on when the property was purchased.

Details for lease extension are available on the PCH website: [www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/your-home/homeowners/leaseholders/lease-extensions/](http://www.plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk/your-home/homeowners/leaseholders/lease-extensions/) or contact the Leasehold team for a copy to be sent to you.

Alternatively, you can find information on [www.lease-advice.org/](http://www.lease-advice.org/)

 **Who is ultimately responsible for us? Is it the Leasehold or Housing team?**

Leaseholders should always come to the Leasehold team in the first instance. Should the matter be a housing related issue, the Leasehold team will work with the Housing team to resolve the issue however you can always contact or speak to the Housing Officer designated to your property if you prefer.

 **How are works supervised?**

Works are carried out with contractors who will arrange for their own site supervisors and the PCH works team will hold regular contract meetings to discuss progress of works.

 **Why can there be delays to invoicing when works have been carried out?**

Contractor invoices need to be collated and practical completion of works signed off before invoices are raised for the Leasehold properties.

 **Do PCH carry checks on trees close to the properties?**

The environmental team carry out inspections within our Estates and Bungalows and these are carried out every 4 years.

 **Could I have list of all emails and phone numbers?**

Each Leasehold property has a designated Leasehold Officer.  
To contact your officer please contact the Leasehold team on **01752 388094**, email [lease.hold@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk](mailto:lease.hold@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk) or use the contact us page on the PCH website.

### **My roof is in good repair but I was told it would be replaced. Why is this the case?**

PCH proactively manage our stock to ensure it is maintained and we meet the obligations as set out in the lease. We do not wait for a component such as a roof (e.g. leak) to fail before we replace them. Each component will have a life cycle in which it will need to be replaced and we keep this under constant review. It should be noted however that ownership is set out in your lease agreement and some items we may only retain a repairing covenant on. In these cases we would only be able to repair / replace on failure. PCH works hard to ensure its asset records are up to date and programmed works are informed by current survey results, when considering leasehold roof renewals we will always look to undertake a survey to confirm the need for renewal.

### **Is your 2022-25 programme of works definitive or subject to change?**

As with any programme, unforeseen circumstances or urgent works can sometimes move the program of works. The properties on the programme have been identified as in need of works so these works will be carried out although timescales potentially could change.

### **What is a sinking fund, please?**

A sinking fund was originally used specifically to refer to money collected to cover the cost of future large individual items of expenditure such as a new roof or major works.

Back when the PCH housing stock was owned by PCC, all leaseholders were consulted to ask if they wanted sinking funds and the majority ruled that they did not so a sinking fund system was not implemented. It is something we are looking into for the future so we would be interested to hear in your opinions on this. We will be reviewing our position on sinking funds and will be seeking leaseholders views and input before any decisions are made. You are able to make regular payments into your leasehold account at any time which can help towards saving for and paying for large major works.

### **What is the quality of works?**

Works will be signed off as 'practically complete' by contractors. This means that most works have been completed so a completion certificate will be completed. A defects list is compiled at the same time to pick up any snags or defect work. Leaseholder invoices will be sent out at practical completion stage and there is a 12-month period for defects or snags to be resolved so you might still have some defects outstanding at invoice stage. Should you have any issue with quality of works we recommend that you email us photos, we can then check against the defects list or raise issues not listed with contract management team.

### **Can you buy the freehold?**

The purchase of the freehold of your property will depend on a number of factors, including whether it is a block or half house property, the number of leaseholders in the block and various other circumstances. There are different ways to take control of the freehold including collective enfranchisement or buying it through agreement. Please contact the Leasehold team if you would like further information on either of these options.

### **I'm trying to sell my flat and there is an estimated cost for future works with no breakdown of the works due to no survey being complete. How can you price without telling us what work is involved?**

Re-sales can on occasion be timed so that whilst we are aware of a major works programme, we are not at stage where we have completed our overall assessment of required works or commenced consultation. In these instances, Managers (Senior Asset Surveyor & Asset Data Manager) within the Asset Team consider the site, look at current and previous costs from projects of a similar nature and provide the best overall estimate that is possible at that time.

### **Why do we pay when a PCH tenant causes damage to the block?**

We need proof to confirm that a PCH tenant has caused the damage so it can be recharged back to the tenant and not added to the service charges. You should get a police crime number or you need to report to the Housing Officer (this can be done via your Leasehold Officer).

### **Will Leaseholders be involved in discussions at an early stage of Planned major works, as leaseholders can often see potential problems that PCH may not see, before plans go to Planning?**

We have met with the Contract works teams and discussed that we would like the Leasehold team and leaseholders to attend resident consultations and be involved from the start of works so this is definitely something we will take forward with new works.

**Can you make invoices more clear for work?**

The Leasehold team are working with the Contract Works team to be able to provide Leaseholders with more information and a clear breakdowns of costs. This will be happening in the coming months.

**The last meeting was a long time ago. Why has this one taken so long?**

PCH have been looking at different ways to improve engagement with leaseholder and the forum will be a key tool in doing this. We will be holding the forum every 6 months and hope that as many Leaseholders as possible will attend and input regularly. We are also looking to potentially start completing satisfaction surveys with leaseholders so we can get regular feedback on the services we provide. We will keep you all updated on progress with this.

**Are there any plans for hydrogen boiler/CHP/community heating etc.? Will Leaseholders be included?**


There are no current plans to change the type heating systems we use and we anticipate another cycle of renewals in keeping with current heating provisions. Alternative options available are currently both more expensive to install and more expensive for our customers in terms of fuel bills.

We do expect this to change in the future as we plan for the 2050 Zero Carbon target and as technology improves and prices hopefully become more competitive will look to adopt as the market matures.

PCH are currently developing a five year Asset Strategy and a key part of the strategy will be around how we will ensure SAP targets are met, Zero Carbon and Asset Grading (i.e. understanding asset performance to inform investment etc). We have recently instructed external consultants to help this strategy to develop and will keep you updated on progress.

**We do not seem to receive advance notice of planned works but invoices at some point after the event. Is this standard or should we be receiving notices about planned works? People have made reference to a Programme of Works which we haven't seen?**

An idea of the programme of works is included on the presentations on the PCH website. You should always receive Section 20 notices advising of any planned works to your property. Full independent details of the Section 20 process is available on [www.lease-advice.org/](http://www.lease-advice.org/).

 I think there should be a “surgery” for us to ask questions when we have a problem. I don’t explain myself very well on the phone because I have a hearing problem. For example, my windows need replacing. What are the rules? Will I replace them and then PCH suddenly decide “oh we are going to get specific windows due to this or that rule?”

Leaseholders can arrange an appointment with their Leasehold Officer at any time, this can be held at Plumer House or they can visit your property if this is more suitable for you. Email contact is available by emailing [lease.hold@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk](mailto:lease.hold@plymouthcommunityhomes.co.uk) or via the contacts page on the PCH website.

 **What margin do PCH make on your business with us?**

We are a not-for-profit charity so no profit is made from any Leasehold business.