

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Working together with our customers, we've anticipated some of the questions you might have about the upcoming bathroom and kitchen replacement programmes and have developed some FAQs to help answer these.

Bathrooms

Will I be provided with a shower?

Yes. After consulting with our customers it has been agreed that showers (fitted over baths) will be installed as standard during bathroom upgrades.

Can I just have a shower and get rid of the bath?

No. During the consultation with our customers, the majority asked for showers as well as baths. Showers use less water than baths so are more environmentally friendly and can help customers save money on their water bills.

Also, our bathrooms have a lifespan of around 30 years, so we must consider all the different people who will be using it over that time and the changing needs they may have.

Does the layout of the bathroom have to stay the same?

Adapting a bathroom layout depends on the individual property. If the layout is particularly poor we may be able to move sinks and baths. However, we wouldn't be able to move toilets as this usually requires major works.

Is the shower head height adjustable?

Yes. The showers we use have an easily-adjustable bracket, which allows you to slide the shower head up and down to suit your height.

Do you fit grab rails in new bathrooms?

Grab rails can be fitted on request.

What about sheltered and supported housing?

Our sheltered and supported homes usually include a wet room (with a seat) to meet a range of mobility needs.

What do I do if I need an adapted shower?

Speak to a member of staff at Onward who can refer you to our Housing and Wellbeing team. They can look into your particular needs and whether we are able to help you.

Do you supply a shower screen?

No. We currently only supply shower curtains. However, if you supply your own screen we would be happy to fit this for you, but it would then be your responsibility to maintain it.

Do I get a choice of taps?

No. There will be one standard tap offered with a lever operation and a push button waste. This tap has proved the most popular on previous bathroom programmes.

What happens if the plaster is poor in my bathroom?

We can carry out any plaster work needed during the bathroom fitting. If this is required, contractors may need to spend an extra two days in your home to carry out the work.

Do I get a choice of tiles?

Following a successful trial during our 2018 bathroom programme, we have three tile colours to choose from (with matching grout): white, haze or mist gloss.

Can you tile the whole bathroom?

No. It's not economical for us to fully tile our bathrooms.

If you want to get your whole bathroom tiled, our contractors may be able to supply you with a price for the work at the rates Onward pay. Any arrangement would need to be agreed between you and the contractor privately.

Not all contractors will be willing to do this. If this is the case, you can arrange for this work to be carried out by someone else. However, please ask for our permission in advance and allow us to make sure the work is of good quality.

Do you paint the bathroom as part of the work?

Yes. Ceilings are painted white and we offer three colour choices for the walls: white, magnolia or grey.

Skirting boards, boxing-in and the internal face of timber doors will also be painted white.

If you have a varnished ply flush door, this will be assessed and finished with varnish if necessary.

Kitchens

Do I get a choice of kitchen unit and worktop colour?

Yes. We worked with a group of Onward customers to help choose a colour range for door fronts and worktops. There are six colours to choose from, as well as a choice of five handles. We will continue to review this with customers over time.

Can we have more cupboards? There just aren't enough in my kitchen.

Unfortunately not. The replacement programme has a set number of cupboards per property, depending on the kitchen size.

My current kitchen is really badly designed. Do we have any say in the layout when it is replaced?

We will always aim to improve layouts, and will contact you to advise on any issues which arise during the survey stage.

The designers will look at your white goods, ask you about your plans to replace them, and then try to make the best use of the space available.

You are also welcome to supply items such as built-in ovens, which we can install for you. However, the oven and hob will remain your responsibility to maintain.

Do we get a choice of sink unit?

Most homes will get a choice of either a one bowl sink unit or a one-and-a-half bowl sink unit. However, smaller kitchens will only be offered the single bowl option.

I want to supply my own sink unit and taps. Can I do this?

Unfortunately not. We can't let customers choose their own sink and taps as this causes complications with our suppliers. We also have to ensure that the items are of a certain standard.

What type of taps do you use and do we get a choice?

There are three types of tap to choose from, which have been picked in consultation with our customers.

Do we get a choice of colour/design of tiles?

Yes. There are four colours of a square tile design and four colours of a brick-shaped tile design to choose from, as picked by our customers during the consultation.

Can we choose the grout colour? White is so hard to keep clean.

Yes. Different grout colour options will be available.

Do we choose the floor too?

Yes. There will be six floor covering designs available from the Polyflor Camaro range: three realistic wood effect planks and three stone effect square tiles.

What about the walls? Does the kitchen get painted or do we have to do that ourselves?

Walls and ceilings will be finished with a choice of white or magnolia paint. We'll also give the walls a plaster skim finish prior to painting, if necessary. We've kept these base colours neutral to make it easier for you to decorate in future if you wish.

If you have a kitchen/diner, this will be assessed on an individual basis. For example, if your wallpaper is in good condition it would not be disturbed.

Do you fit cooker hoods?

No, these are not standard items. However, if you supply us with a cooker hood we would be happy to install it for you, but you will be responsible for maintaining it.

We do supply good quality extractor fans.

Do you box in pipes when you fit the kitchens?

We will box in some pipes if needed. However, there are some pipes that can't be boxed in as access is required. We never box in boilers.

Can the cooker be moved? I don't feel it's in the right place in my kitchen.

This will depend on the property and the complexity of moving the gas supply. There are regulations that have to be met, so any move must be practical and safe.

How can you guarantee that the suppliers will still have replacement parts for the kitchens in 10 years' time?

The reason we have chosen a quality supplier and a long-term contract is to ensure that we can get a guaranteed supply of the chosen unit types and doors.

How will you make sure that you have skilled kitchen fitters with a good attitude?

Customers who were involved in the process of selecting the units said they felt very reassured that Onward were taking customer care seriously and would use good quality contractors with the right attitude to fit the kitchens.

We will also regularly gather feedback to make sure that customers are satisfied with the work.

