

## FAQ's

### Who do I contact for further information?

- **Leaseholders** - Rebekah Brydon, Major Works Officer, Investment Team.  
Email Rebekah at [Major.Works@Stevenage.gov.uk](mailto:Major.Works@Stevenage.gov.uk) or telephone on 01438 242666

### Have we been consulted on this already?

- No, this is a new procurement to replace a contract that is coming to an end. However, we did contact you in 2017 to let you know that we were planning on procuring a compliance contract but we were unable to secure a contractor that we felt provided the right value for money. We are now looking at this again with the inclusion of these further gas compliance works. By procuring all the elements together, we will be able to provide you with a much more robust contract which benefits from the economies of scale.

### Why are you outsourcing these works?

- It would not be economical for the council to deliver such works in house as they are specialist works that require skilled operative with specialist knowledge, qualifications, equipment, registrations and insurances for short duration of work and are therefore best provided by specialist contractor.

### Have I been charged for this element before?

- Yes, we have charged you before within the repairs section of your invoice. If you have ever asked for a breakdown of the repairs costs, you may have noticed the various aspects of this contract that your block requires.

### Why have you decided to do this now?

- The current contracts are due to expire soon, the council has statutory obligation to perform these works to remain compliant with those obligations. By combining the service, we are able to give you the best value for money from the chosen contractor.

### How do you select the contractors?

- Contracts are awarded on a competitive tendering basis, whereby contractors are invited to bid for the contract. The tender submissions are then assessed by a panel on the basis of cost and quality.

### What happens if the contractor doesn't perform well?

- Our intention is to select a contractor who can demonstrate a strong track record of delivering works of this nature and work closely in partnership to ensure high standards of workmanship and customer care. Contractor's performance requirements are detailed in their contracts and will be managed using robust mechanisms which are also set out in their contract.

### What is Section 20?

- Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 sets out how a landlord must consult with leaseholders, where the landlord intends to carry out '**Major Works**', or enter into a '**Qualifying Long Term Agreement**'.
- **Major Works** are any works which will cost the leaseholder **over £250**.
- A '**Qualifying Long Term Agreement**' or QLTA, is an agreement entered into by the landlord with a wholly independent organisation or contractor for a period of more than **12 months**. Landlords must consult where the amount payable by *any one* contributing leaseholder **exceeds £100** in any one year.
- For more information, please go to The Leasehold Advisory Service website- <http://www.lease-advice.org/topics/?topic=section-20-consultation> or contact the Major Works Officer at SBC.

### Can I recommend a contractor?

- While the opinions and views of leaseholders are invited and will be considered, leaseholders **do not** have the right to nominate a contractor for these contracts.
- For this contract, the works will be of such a high value, that EU procurement rules apply and the proposed contract must be advertised by public notice in the Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU). This means leaseholders cannot nominate a contractor.

### How will I be billed for the repairs works?

- The way in which you are billed for these types of works will remain the same as it is now. These contracts are for works which you have always benefitted from; they are not new elements being added to your service charge.

### As a leaseholder, am I paying for the tenanted flats?

- No. Leaseholders pay for their share of the costs directly through their service charges whereas tenant's contributions are paid from their rent.

### I am claiming benefits; do I still need to pay?

- The Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) may be able to assist people receiving job seekers allowance, universal tax credits or pension credit with their Service Charges. Please seek independent advice.