

Wood & Laminate Flooring Statement

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Wood or laminate flooring has become a very popular home improvement. However it can, on occasions, lead to an increase in nuisance caused by noise. Wood flooring provides very poor sound insulation and this can cause disturbance to neighbouring residents, particularly in flats.
- 1.2 The laying of a laminate or hardwood floor in place of carpet results in more impact noise (footsteps, chair scrape, dropped items) travelling into the floor. These noises can quickly become an annoyance for neighbours, often without the customer being aware of it.
- 1.3 It is clear that some types of home are less suitable to have wood flooring than others. In particular, flats in converted houses are not suitable. Even in houses there can be a problem caused by the absence of sound deadening carpet.
- 1.4 This policy has been developed following 'good practice' guidance in the sector and also following reference to [Building Regulations Part 'E'](#). (The aim of this regulation is to protect residents from the noise of activities in other rooms or adjoining properties. This has been highlighted by the government as a major cause of tension between residents).

NOTE: WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT, THE TERMS WOOD OR LAMINATE FLOORING SHOULD BE TAKEN TO INCLUDE LAMINATE FLOORING OR WOODEN FLOOR COVERING. THE ISSUE OF BARE FLOORBOARDS IS DISCUSSED AT THE END OF THIS POLICY DOCUMENT.

2.0 POLICY OVERVIEW

- 2.1 The laying of laminate or wood flooring is considered by us to be a home improvement. Karbon's permission is required before wood or laminate flooring is laid. Residents must receive permission from us in writing (via letter or email).
- 2.2 All requests for permission will be considered on their own merits, the following general principles will be followed:
 - In upper flats in converted properties, or upper purpose-built flats with wooden floors, permission will **not** be given.
 - In upper flats with solid floors, permission will **not** be given.

- In ground floor flats, permission will normally be given provided:
 - If there is no history of complaints of noise nuisance concerning the flat in question.
 - Other characteristics of the building such as under-floor heating do not make the proposed floor covering unsuitable.
- In houses, permission will normally be given if:
 - There is no history of complaints of noise nuisance concerning the house in question.
 - Other characteristics of the building, such as under-floor heating, do not make the proposed floor covering unsuitable.

2.3 Whenever permission is granted it will always be conditional on

- Suitable underlay being used. Details must be submitted to Karbon, and an inspection may be required once the underlay has been laid but before the wood flooring has been laid.
- Felt pads being fitted to the legs of chairs, tables and other furniture.
- Resident agreement that if the flooring has to be lifted to allow access for repairs or inspections, Karbon will not be liable for uplifting or relaying the flooring, or for any damage that may be caused in gaining access.
- Residents are advised to ensure that any contents insurance will cover the cost of removing and replacing flooring or other elements damaged in this way.
- The resident must remove the flooring upon termination of the tenancy and leaving the property or they will be recharged the full cost of removal and disposal.

2.4 Permission may be withdrawn at any time if the use of wood or laminate flooring is found to contribute to continued noise nuisance problems after it has been installed. In these circumstances, residents will be required to remove the laminate flooring or cover it with underlay and carpet. The cost of this will be the responsibility of the tenant.

2.5 Where tenants have laid wood or laminate flooring and it has to be removed to enable repair or improvement works to be carried out, the tenant will be responsible for its removal and, if necessary, replacement.

3.0 BARE WOOD FLOORBOARDS

3.1 Some customers choose to leave floorboards bare and they are often painted or sanded and varnished. Others have bare floorboards.

3.2 Not applying a floor covering cannot be considered a home improvement, so the restrictions applying to wood or laminate flooring cannot be used.

- 3.3 If the presence of bare floorboards is found to be contributing to noise nuisance problems, the customer will be informed that they must do what they can to minimise the noise transference, and that if they do not they may be in breach of their tenancy conditions. Measures they could take include:
- Laying carpets or rugs, especially in areas of high use, or the rooms that are affecting the neighbours most.
 - Fitting felt pads to furniture legs.
 - Removing outdoor shoes when indoors.
- 3.4 If these measures are ineffective and the customer has bare floorboards as a lifestyle choice, they will be informed that their action is causing a nuisance and is a breach of their tenancy conditions. The usual anti-social behaviour procedures will then be followed.