

Wolverhampton Homes

NHMF Best Practice Awards 2009

Submission for: -

The contractor providing the most innovative maintenance service

Decorating support for vulnerable tenants and those tenants wishing to learn how to decorate their homes after essential maintenance works

Key partners

Wolverhampton Homes DLO, Wolverhampton College, Bullock Construction, Frank Haslam Milan and Thomas Vale and Travis Perkins.

When was the activity undertaken?

From August 2007 to present.

Where was the activity based?

In tenant's homes.

Who was involved?

Trainees, tenants, Wolverhampton Homes employees and partner employees.

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What did the activity involve?

This activity involved additional decorating support for more vulnerable tenants as part of the Decent Homes programme.

It is now being extended to train tenants who wish to carry out minor DIY and decoration works themselves. With an increase in reality shows like 60 minute makeover and changing rooms it is hoped by using the re-badged 'Wicks' DIY supplement notes, this will reduce the amount of rectification work identified during the void process.

It also has other local benefits like the training of local people who have previously been under achievers to become qualified decorators.

Background

Wolverhampton Homes started a Decent Homes pilot scheme in June 2007 concentrating on three areas of the city.

The pilot was to see how the scheme would work in practice and gave us to chance to gauge tenant's views and feedback. It was also very important to iron out any issues or problems before the main programme started in January 2008.

Tenants' views were extremely positive from the pilot scheme but one theme came out each time which was the issue of re-decorating. Not always for Wolverhampton Homes to undertake the work but to show tenants how to start should they wish to do the work themselves.

The Decent Homes project means that decorations can be damaged on walls especially if re-wiring and central heating work takes place in bedrooms, living room, dining room, hall, stairs and landing.

Decorating is automatically carried out when a bathroom or kitchen is replaced.

Decorating grants are available as part of the programme but many vulnerable and elderly tenants were finding it difficult to carry out decorating work themselves.

What we did

We immediately identified this as a key issue. Nearly 30% of council tenants are over 60 years of age. In line with general population trends this is increasing, particularly in the 75+ age group.

A very high proportion, around 50% of tenants, consider that they have a disability or long-term illness – significantly higher than within the population of Wolverhampton as a whole which is itself also relatively high at 29%.

We therefore acted straight away and came up with a number of strategies to address the problem with our partner contractors, Wolverhampton Homes in-house DLO, Bullock, Frank Haslam Milan and Thomas Vale.

This extra work is above and beyond the Decent Homes programme and is carried out to support vulnerable tenants including the elderly and disabled, who would not be able to carry out the work themselves. It also supplements the work already being carried out to identify disabled tenants needing adaptations to their homes and arranging these as part of the Decent Homes programme.

The after care decorating programme is targeted at: -

- Pensioners
- People with disabilities
- Other vulnerable tenants unable to carry out decorating themselves

It has also helped tenants who wish to do the work themselves with a professional decorator on hand.

As well as providing additional essential support for tenants, this programme also adds to Decent Homes contractor targets for local employment and training.

As part of the worklessness stream of our Financial Inclusion Strategy, Wolverhampton Homes had previously worked with Wolverhampton College to recruit apprenticeships (30 new trainees from September 2008), so we contacted them again and built up a new partnership for our Decent Homes after care decorating programme.

We started to recruit trainees who were selected through the college and two local training centres – Heantun Housing and Timken Training Centre. We were especially keen to recruit women and trainees from BME communities. Again because we were conscious of the demographics we were serving.

Our first three trainees were from BME communities including one woman.

Trainees aim to achieve an NVQ qualification as part of the programme.

Benefits for the trainee: -

- Raised self esteem - following a period of unemployment
- `On the job' training
- Experience in a trade
- Opportunity of a permanent job
- Chance to work with a professional

- Achieve a recognised qualification
- Building relationships in the community and the feeling of a contribution

All trainees are supervised by Wolverhampton Homes' professional staff, Steve Wall, one of the painters and decorators, said: *"This project has been great. It's really good to pass on my skills to others and see them develop and improve their long-term job prospects."*

Funding

The Intermediate Labour Market (ILM) work placements are funded via Marie Matthew Skills into Jobs through Wolverhampton College and Wolverhampton City Council ABCD regeneration scheme.

Once the trainee has been through a training programme of between six and nine months they then will move across to one of our partners to continue their training – then funded by our partner contractor.

What did the activity deliver?

Both our tenants and the trainees are gaining from this programme – it helps the community and helps get more people into work. It will have a significant impact on all communities as the Decent Homes programme is going to affect all our tenants.

This is part of an overall initiative within Wolverhampton Homes that profiles our customers and tailors services to their needs. We also recognise the key role we have to play as a strategic partner within the city to contribute residents' priorities reflected in the Local Area Agreement:

- to live longer, healthier lives
- to like where they live
- to feel safer and more involved
- to have access to the skills they need, and
- to have more job opportunities.

This programme will contribute to all the above priorities and also to Wolverhampton Homes' Financial Inclusion Strategy.

Without the support of our partners this project would never have happened. Everyone has worked so hard to make it work together.

Stan Coates, aged 76, of Caledonia, had his hall stairs and landing and bedroom painted as the part of the after care programme.

He said: "I am absolutely delighted with the work, it was such a professional job and carried out really quickly.

"It really was the icing on the cake after the Decent Homes improvements and now I feel like I have a new home."

The aim of the after care programme is to bring trainees up to a level to secure employment with the Decent Homes partners.

Trainee Palo Devi said: "I have really enjoyed my work with Wolverhampton Homes and its partners.

"The experience is invaluable plus it is a great to make such a difference to peoples' lives and their homes. Every tenant has been extremely happy with the work and we have received great feedback."

Many tenants have used the professional advice opportunity to then decorate throughout – giving them a brand new home. Many have also brought new furniture and accessories giving their home a real 'make over'. The added value of reducing voids costs by supporting tenants to undertake work themselves is yet to materialise. But work which has been undertaken is of an acceptable standard.

Why do you think you should win this award?

Innovation

Wolverhampton Homes and its partners listened to tenants concerns and acted on them straight away.

This improvement work is over and above the 'routine' work carried out as part of any programme and is targeted at the more vulnerable in society.

We are contributing more than usual to the employment and training requirements in areas that need it. There is a 5% unemployment rate in Wolverhampton compared to the West Midlands region of 3%.

The satisfaction surveys sent out to tenants who have had Decent Homes work carried out include prize choices of home contents insurance (one years cover) or a deposit in a credit union account. This contributes to our Financial Inclusion Strategy.

Innovative thinking brought about the after care programme which has made a real difference to people's lives. It has complimented the Decent Homes programme, raised satisfaction levels and tenants truly feel that their needs are being met and they have been listened to.

Feedback

The feedback from every tenant has been extremely positive.

The extra work and support has been gratefully received from all tenants involved in this programme.

Any other information?

The Decent Homes after care project continues and will go from strength to strength during 2008 with more vulnerable tenants seeing extra improvements over and above the Decent Homes programme.

Trainee Palo Devi with
tenant Stan Coates, aged 76





Wolverhampton Homes

“Decent Homes People
Focused Quality Services”



“Built for the Trade”

Wickes



BUILD YOUR SKILLS

PAINTING BASICS

Whatever paint job you're tackling, you will need to select the right type of paint, decide which painting tools to use, prepare the surface and then apply the paint.

If you're redecorating walls, you will generally need to apply one new coat of paint of the same type as before. Should the colour change, from old to new, be extreme,

two or even three coats may be necessary. If the wall is stained (even a very small one), never paint over without sealing the area first, or it will bleed through - see speciality paints.

When painting new wood or metal surfaces, you need to build up a paint system. This generally consists of a primer to ensure that the paint system bonds well with the surface,

an undercoat to provide a smooth and opaque covering layer, and then the decorative top coat.

If you're painting bare walls and ceilings with water-based emulsion paint, there is generally no need to prime the surface, although you may need to thin the first coat with water.



APPLYING PAINT

Using a paint brush

- Brushes are most painters' first choice for painting wood and metal, and many people prefer them to rollers (see below) for walls and ceilings too.
- They come in a range of sizes from 12mm up to 100mm - the widest brush most amateur decorators can handle comfortably. Choose the width to suit the job you're tackling - 12mm for narrow window bars, 50mm for skirting boards and 100mm for a wall.
- To load the brush, dip it in the paint to no more than half its bristle length. Then draw it against the edge of the tin to scrape off excess paint. [PIC 1]
- Brush the paint onto the surface in a series of parallel overlapping strips. On wood, work along the grain. Then brush across the strips at right angles, and finish off with light strokes in the original direction. [PIC 2]
- At external corners, let the brush run off the edge of the surface. If you brush in the opposite direction, paint will collect on the edge and cause runs. At internal angles, brush the paint well into the angle first, then brush it out parallel with the corner.
- Hold small brushes by the ferrule for comfort and control. For larger brushes it's generally easier to grasp the handle.

Using a paint roller

- Choose a medium pile roller sleeve for smooth surfaces and a longer pile one for textured surfaces such as textured ceilings. Wash before use.
- Fill the roller tray to one third of the way up the roller slope. Roll the sleeve down into the paint, then back up again to spread the paint evenly.
- Push the roller across the wall or ceiling in a series of parallel runs. Then roller the paint out and merge the strips with diagonal strokes, finishing off with light strokes in the original direction. [PIC 3] Use a brush for cutting in, corners.

TYPES OF PAINT

Traditionally, water-based 'emulsion' paints are used on walls & ceilings, and solvent-based paints for wood and metal but times have changed. The following should give you an idea of the many paint varieties available and their uses but please note, coverage is only a guide, in real life, it is dependent on how the paint is applied and the porosity of the surface. Always read the product instructions before use.

Water-based and Emulsion paint

If you plan to use emulsion paint, you have a few simple choices to make: the colour, finish, washability and ability to cover. Brilliant white and magnolia are the most common colours, but most paint ranges offer a selection of tinted whites and pastel colours. The finish can be matt or silk, as for quality, always use the best you can, or want too afford, for the job you are undertaking. You may want to use one of the following water-based paints instead of ordinary emulsion: Kitchen and Bathroom, which gives a tougher, more durable, finish in these steamy rooms or maybe a **Washable Matt** - in standard or **One Coat**, for rooms that are not as badly affected but still need to be wiped down, from time to time. **Paint for New Plaster**, which as its name implies allows new plaster to continue to dry after it has been decorated.

Mould Kill Emulsion, for rooms where condensation and mould growth is a problem. Emulsion paint is sold in 2.5 and 5-litre containers, with larger sizes available in the Trade ranges, and typically covers about 12m² per litre. So a single coat on a wall 2.4m high and 6m long will need about 1.25 litres. Or even: **Ripple and Textured Coatings** - great for covering hairline cracks in interior walls and ceilings. **Smooth and Textured Masonry** - for external walls.

Acrylic Primer - suitable for interior and external use. **Acrylic Eggshell** - low odour satin finish for both interior walls and trim. **Acrylic Primer Undercoat** - fast drying primer / undercoat suitable for interior and exterior use. **Quick Drying Satinwood** is a durable, high quality, low odour satin sheen finish for wood and metal. **Quick Dry Gloss** - a modern low odour trim finish, tough, hard wearing high gloss finish

Solvent-based paint

Choosing gloss or solvent paint is a little more complicated. The colour and finish choices are as simple as for emulsion - any colour you fancy, within reason, and either a high gloss or a softer satin gloss (eggshell) finish but there are several other selection factors.

The first is the consistency of the paint. Do you want traditional liquid gloss - the type preferred by the trade - or non-drip gloss? The latter is easier to apply and goes on more thickly.

The second is where it is to be used. For outdoors you really need paint specially formulated to extra durability, Gloss paint is available in sizes ranging from 750ml to 5 litres. Coverage is typically about 14m² per litre for non-drip gloss, and up to 17m² per litre for liquid gloss. That's enough to paint both sides of four or five doors.

Speciality (specific use) paints

Emulsions and gloss paints will tackle most of your normal painting requirements but there are other jobs that need a specially formulated product. For example, speciality paints ranges includes: Radiator Enamel Paint, Blackboard Paint, Hammered & Smooth Finish Paint for outside metalwork, Matt Black Paint for Beams, Brick and Tile Paint, Garage Floor Paint, Interior Floor Paint, Primer Seal Stain Block, Melamine & Tile Primer, Quick Drying MDF Primer, Brick & Tile Paint, Heat Shield 450°C matt black spray, Stain Block or a Stain Sealer Spray (dries in about 15 minutes).

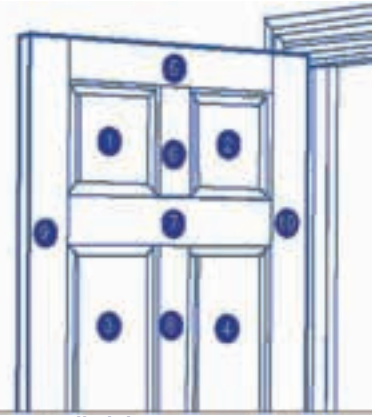
Primers and undercoats

If you're painting wood or metal, you need to use a primer and an undercoat to get top-quality performance. On softwood and man-made boards, use either Wickes' traditional white solvent-based Wood Primer or water-based acrylic - quick drying - if you're in a hurry. Treat knots with **Knotting Solution** first, and use **Aluminium Wood Primer** on resinous hardwoods. On metal, use **Red Oxide Primer** on iron and steel, and Metal Primer on other metals. Then follow any primer (except Wickes Primer/Undercoat) with a white Undercoat, followed by a final topcoat of high or satin gloss. On dry, old or porous plaster, and cement, you can apply **Primer Seal** before emulsion paints. If the wall is stained, use **Stain Block** or **Stain Sealer**. Use **Interior Damp seal** on damp plaster, after rectifying the cause.

Painting sequences

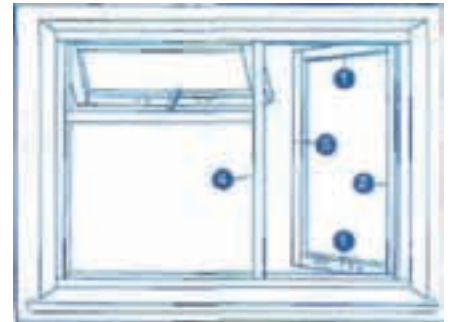
To get good results when you're painting, you need to work in a logical sequence. The aim is to be able to blend adjacent areas of paint together so you don't see a join when the paint dries - it's called 'keeping a wet edge' in the trade. So on a wall, for example, you start in one top corner - the right if you're right-handed, the left if you're left-handed. You tackle about a square metre at a time, then paint the next squares down the wall to skirting board level. Then you move across the wall and start again at ceiling level. You treat a flush door in much the same way, but working with smaller squares.

For more intricate surfaces such as panelled doors and casement or sash windows, follow the numbered sequences shown in the illustrations.



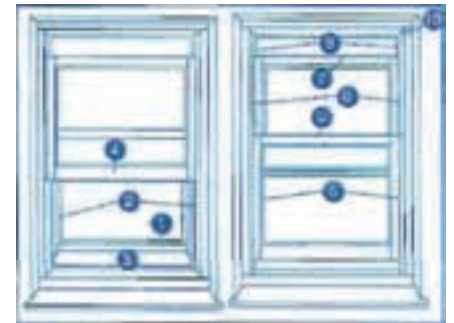
Painting panelled doors

Paint the panels first, then tackle the frame members working from the top down.



Painting casement windows

Paint the hinged casement first, then tackle the frame and sill. Repeat the sequence outdoors.



Painting sash windows

Open the sashes and paint all accessible surfaces. Then reverse the sashes to complete the job.

PROBLEM SOLVER

[P] The paint film is full of bits

[S] Dust the top of the tin before opening it. Strain the paint into a paint kettle before use. Dust and wash down surfaces before painting them. Work the bristles of a new brush to remove loose hairs.

[P] The previous colour is showing through the new paint.

[S] Apply an undercoat first to obliterate the old colour. Apply the new paint more evenly. Don't brush the new paint out too much.

[P] There are unsightly runs in the new paint film.

[S] Don't try to apply the paint so thickly. Take care not to leave excess paint on external angles. Don't apply too much paint over mouldings or other projections.

[P] The paint film has dried with a wrinkly look.

[S] Don't apply the paint so thickly. Avoid painting in hot sunny conditions.

[P] The new paint film has tiny craters in it.

[S] Avoid painting outdoors when rain is likely. Avoid painting in a damp or humid atmosphere. Avoid painting late in the day when dew may form.

[P] The paint film remains tacky beyond the normal drying time.

[S] Check that the surface is free of traces of grease or wax. Make sure there is adequate ventilation, especially in confined spaces. Check that the correct solvent was used to thin the paint.

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Wolverhampton Homes
*"Decent Homes People
 Focused Quality Services"*



Travis Perkins
"Built for the Trade"

Wickes



BUILD YOUR SKILLS

PAPERHANGING BASICS

- If you fancy papering your walls, you need to choose the right type of wallcovering (see overleaf), check that you have all the tools and equipment necessary, prepare the wall surface and then hang the paper length by length.
- If your walls are painted at present, the only preparation you need is to wash the surfaces down with a solution of sugar soap or household detergent, rinse them with clean water and leave them to dry.
- If your walls are already papered, you must strip off the old paper first (see overleaf) before hanging the new. Even the paper backing left after peeling off old vinyl wallpapers must come off. Then wash the wall surface with clean water.
- If your walls are undecorated plaster or plasterboard, you need to seal the surface with a coat of size - diluted wallpaper paste - first. This ensures that you will be able to slide pasted lengths into place as you hang them.



HANGING WALLPAPER

Cutting and pasting

Before you start measuring and cutting lengths, check what type of pattern match the paper has. Some have a straight match, some a random match, while a few have a drop pattern so opposite edges of the length don't match.

Measure and cut each length about 100mm overlong. Place it face down on the pasting table and brush paste on, working from the middle towards the edges, which you must align with the edge of the table.

Fold the pasted section with pasted sides facing inwards, move the paper along and paste the next section. Make another fold and finish the pasting. [PIC 1]

Hanging the length

Leave the folded paper to soak for the time recommended in the hanging instructions. Then mark a plumb line on the first wall, about 25mm less than the paper's width from the corner. Position the top of the length on the wall with a 50mm overlap onto the ceiling and align its edge with the marked line.

Brush the top section into place.

Then brush the rest of the length to the wall, brushing down the centre and then out towards the edges. [PIC 2]

After trimming the first length at top and bottom (see below), hang the following lengths in the same way, matching the pattern edge to edge. Use a seam roller to bed down the seams unless the paper is an embossed type.

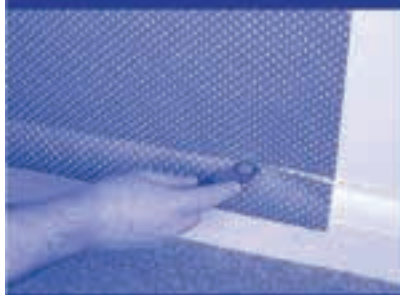
Trimming to length and width

Press the paper into the wall/ceiling angle with the edge of your paperhanging scissors. Then peel the paper away and cut carefully along the marked line.

Brush the trimmed edge back into the angle.

At skirting-board level, again use your scissors to mark the cutting line, trim off the waste [PIC 3] and brush the paper back into place.

Trim the last length to be hung on the wall down in width so about 25mm will turn onto the next wall. Since the corner will probably not be square, turning the full width means that the open edge of the length will not be truly vertical, and this will throw subsequent lengths out of true.



Most roll wallcoverings are all made to a standard size - 10.05m long and about 530mm wide. A few, such as lining paper and woodchip paper (see below) also come in longer rolls. The cheapest patterned wallpaper you can buy is simply printed, so it's very vulnerable to stains and physical damage. Avoid this type except for ceilings and for walls in protected locations - the back wall of an alcove, for example. Washable or spongeable

wallpapers are a little more expensive, but have a plastic coating applied over the design so they'll withstand staining and can be sponged down without wetting the paper. the waterproof coating makes them difficult to strip, however - you may need a steam stripper. Hang them in rooms subject to moderate daily wear, using a paste containing a fungicide to stop mould growing as the paste dries out. Some washable papers are sold ready-pasted -with a layer of dried paste on the back which you activate by soaking each length in a trough of water before hanging it.



Papering round corners

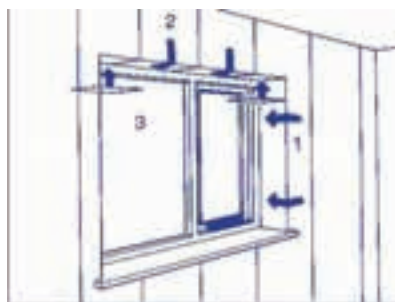
Turn about 25mm round the corner, then hang the trimmed off width to a plumb line on the next wall.

Vinyl wallpaper

Vinyl wallpaper has the design printed on the plastic surface layer, and this is bonded during manufacture to a paper backing for ease of hanging. This makes vinyls much tougher than washables - you can scrub them if necessary - and makes them easy to strip too. You just peel off the plastic surface layer, then soak and strip the plain paper backing from the wall. Hang them in steamy rooms such as kitchens and bathrooms, and in areas where heavy wear or marking are expected - stairwells, for example. Hang them with paste containing a fungicide. Ready-pasted vinyls are also available.

Blown vinyl wallpaper

The vinyl surface layer of this wallpaper contains tiny air bubbles that expand its thickness and allow it to be embossed in register with the surface design - for example, to resemble ceramic tiling. Plain textured vinyls are also available, intended for overpainting once hung. They're tougher than relief wallpapers.



Papering round windows

Trim the first length over the window reveal as shown, then paste and hang pieces in the numbered order.



Relief wallpaper

Relief wallpapers are plain papers embossed with regular or random designs and are intended to be overpainted once hung. They are ideal for covering up defects such as cracks and lumps on wall and ceiling surfaces, but need hanging with care to avoid flattening the emboss. Use any type of paste.

Woodchip paper

Woodchip paper has small chips of wood sandwiched between two layers of paper, giving a surface texture resembling coarse porridge. It's a very inexpensive paper that covers wall defects well, and is intended to be overpainted once hung. Use any type of paste.

Lining paper

This plain smooth paper is used to line walls that contain a lot of cracks or are of uneven porosity. It comes in two grades -800 (standard) and 1000 (heavy-duty trade)

- and is hung horizontally with butted joints. It can also be used as an economy cover-up wallpaper, hung vertically and then painted with emulsion paint.

Papering round switches and sockets

Electricity should be switch off at the fuse box. Mark the out line through the paper, then cut and trim as shown. Tuck the paper in behind the face plate and ensure the paper and socket are fully dry before re-fixing.

Borders

Borders are narrow rolls of printed washable or vinyl wallpaper used as a contrast to the rest of the wall finish - at ceiling level, for example, or next to picture or dado rails. They're hung on painted walls with paste containing a fungicide. If they are being hung over a washable or vinyl wallpaper, you need to use a special ready-mixed border adhesive.

Paperhanging equipment

The equipment you need for paperhanging includes the following:

- tape measure, pencil, straightedge and paperhanging scissors;
- plumb bob and line for marking verticals;
- pasting table, paste bucket, paste (tub paste for some borders) and pasting brush;
- water trough for ready-pasted wallpapers;
- paperhanging brush (or sponge for washables and vinyls), seam roller, trimming tools, overlap adhesive for washables and vinyls.

Wallpaper coverage guide								
Distance round room (including doors and windows)								
Wall height - metres - feet	10m (33)	12m (39)	14m (46)	16m (52)	18m (59)	20m (66)	22m (72)	24m (79)
2.1 - 2.3m (7ft - 7ft 6in)	5	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
2.3 - 2.4m (7ft 6in - 8ft)	5	6	7	8	9	10	10	11
2.4 - 2.6m (8ft - 8ft 6in)	5	6	7	8	10	11	12	13
2.6 - 2.7m (8ft 6in - 9ft)	5	6	7	9	10	11	12	13
2.7 - 2.9m (9ft - 9ft 6in)	6	7	8	9	10	12	12	14

PROBLEM SOLVER

[P] The paper has developed a rash of blisters. [P] Patchy stains are showing through the wallpaper.

[S] Leave the paper to soak for the correct time. Check that the paper is evenly and [S] Wash down wall surfaces first to kill mould spores. Seal in water and nicotine stains completely pasted. Check that the walls are dry and unaffected by damp, condensation by treating wall with special stain blocker before paperhanging. Spot-prime any saturation or efflorescence. exposed plasterboard nails.

[P] The paper has developed creases when hung. [P] Overlaps at room corners won't stay stuck.

[S] Handle the lengths with more care, brushing each one down the wall first and then [S] Apply more paste to relief and woodchip papers. Use an overlap adhesive to stick towards the edges. If creases recur, peel off the length and brush it back into place overlaps if using washable or vinyl papers, and use a seam roller to ensure a good carefully to pull the creases out. bond.

[P] The seams keep lifting

[S] Make sure the edges of each length are thoroughly pasted. Use a seam roller to bed the seams down firmly. Size porous wall surfaces before starting work.

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