



WILLIAMSBURGH

HOUSING ASSOCIATION

2. Responsive Repairs

2.1 Responsive Repairs and Maintenance

Responsive repairs (day to day) are defined as those repairs which are carried out on an ad hoc basis as the need arises and which cannot be deferred for inclusion in planned or cyclical maintenance programmes. Striking the appropriate balance between expenditure on responsive repairs, cyclical and planned maintenance will depend on the characteristics of the Association's stock.

The Association has procedures in place to deliver our repairs responsibilities set out within the tenancy agreement, in order that:

- staff taking repairs, will be appropriately trained and have access to guidelines for checking where responsibility for a repair lies,
- the need for pre-inspections can be assessed.

Putting our customers first, by delivering a high quality, prompt responsive service is a prime objective, however, speed of response will not override all other considerations. The Association recognises that out of hours repairs are usually more expensive than those done in the normal working day. The Association will endeavour to find the optimum balance between planned and responsive maintenance.

2.2 Repair Reporting Systems Contd.

The repair service is complemented by an effective repairs reporting procedure. Getting this early stage correct, helps to ensure repairs are recorded promptly, accurately logged and the correct work is ordered. When a doubt arises about the requirement of the repair, a pre-inspection may be necessary to acquire sufficient information to allow the appropriate decision to be made.

The computer software system used to record repairs will have a facility to provide a repairs history for each property. Consideration will be given to whether a repair can be fitted into future planned maintenance or improvement works in order that expenditure is not wasted on repair jobs which will only have a short life.

The following list will be used to review the repairs reporting procedures:

- Procedures are well publicised and these can be translated into other languages or in other formats where appropriate or required.
- Procedures for recording repairs will also take account of performance monitoring requirements.
- A range of reporting methods is offered: in person, by telephone, email, by letter, via Association website, by SMS messaging.
- We aim to keep procedures simple, convenient and accessible to our customers.
- Facilities for people with special needs such as people with visual or hearing impairments are provided.
- Arrangements for reporting and dealing with emergency repairs out of office hours are in place and publicised.
- Tenant/Repair handbooks will be produced to assist customers identify and describe repairs, will be provided to tenants.
- All Association staff will be able to accept repair requests from tenants and report repairs that come to their attention.

2.3 Repair Reporting Systems Contd.

- Staff designated to process repair requests will be competent and well trained, with good communication skills and an understanding of building technology and terminology.
- A control framework is in place in terms of peer/management review on a sample basis and avoiding one person instructing works and authorising payments for the same repairs.

Maintenance Record Keeping

The Association's housing software system will have the capacity to store the repairs history relating to each property for a reasonable period of time (5 years minimum). It will have a facility to allow staff to check the property history and improvement works, in order that expenditure is not wasted on repair jobs which will only have a short life. A repair will only be delayed if as a result, greater costs are not incurred and/or the tenant's comfort does not suffer as a consequence.

The housing IT software systems used by the Association will facilitate the following:

- Aid the Association's potential for better quality customer service.
- Analyse and cross-analyse data.
- Produce planned works programmes based on different scenarios.
- Produce works budgets based on different scenarios.
- Potential for identifying trends e.g. component failure etc.
- Potential for monitoring trends.
- Efficiencies in working methods.
- Increased accuracy of information generated/linking with finance, management and/or development data.
- Generating of information with the potential for better reporting methods.

2.3 Repair Reporting Systems Contd.

Procedure note for recording and processing repairs

Any potential repair which is reported to the Association will, in the first instance, be recorded as a 'Repair Order' when appropriate, in the 'Repairs' section of the Aareon QL system, which is then emailed to the contractor via the software and recorded within the 'relogging' directory.

Details on the repair order include:

- Property - tenant name, address and flat position.
- Contractor - name, address and telephone number.
- A description of work required.
- A repair order reference number/maintenance request ref no.
- Date and time reported and required to be completed by.
- The repair priority - Emergency, Urgent, Routine, Void, or Right to Repair (1,3 or 7 days).
- Trade code.
- Contact details.
- Quality Satisfaction questionnaire.
- A section to be signed by contractor.
- A section to be signed by resident on satisfactory completion of repair.

2.3 Repair Reporting Systems Contd.

If the customer services assistant/maintenance assistant is unclear about the repair to be undertaken, a pre-inspection may be required. An appointment would be offered to the tenant and then recorded in the 1st Touch 'maintenance diary'. Further advice can then be provided by the maintenance staff member to clarify requirements.

Invoice processing

On completion of repair work, the contractor will submit his invoice, along with a copy of the repair order and a completed quality satisfaction questionnaire, signed by the contractor and tenant. The invoice is first received by the Finance Section, who posts it onto the contractor's account on a 'held' status, awaiting approval for payment.

The invoice is then passed to the Maintenance Section for processing and approval. The Maintenance Assistant will record the completion date (time if an emergency) of the repair for performance monitoring purposes. Two authorised Maintenance staff will then scrutinise the labour and materials identified in the invoice to ensure that they are reasonable for the work instructed. If satisfied, they will approve the invoice and set the 'repair status' to 'complete' and return the original invoice to finance section for payment. Authorised staff expenditure limits are set out and adhered to in line with the Association's 'Treasury Management Policy'.

2.4 Monitoring

Performance Monitoring provides the framework by which the Association monitors its performance against set targets in relation to the repairs and maintenance service it provides.

The Association seeks to provide a high standard of maintenance service to all our Associations. Targets are set which will take account of Scottish Housing Regulator guidance, the Scottish Social Housing Charter and Good Practice, as well as customer feedback, needs and aspirations. These targets are set to provide a standard against which the Association can measure its own and its contractors' performance.

In order to achieve these objectives, regular reports will be presented to the Maintenance Sub Committee which will assist the Association in monitoring its performance against agreed targets, objectives, standards and budgets.

Reports will focus on the targets set against each of the following headings:

- Maintenance Expenditure Report

Actual expenditure measured against budgeted expenditure for each of the categories of maintenance – Responsive Repairs, Cyclical Maintenance and Planned Maintenance. Any significant variance in the budgets will be highlighted and Committee advised of reasons for the variance.

- Response Times Report

The Association and Contractor's performance will be measured against the set response time for the categories of responsive repairs:

(a) Emergency (2 hours)

(b) Urgent (48 hours)

(c) Routine (10 days)

(d) Void (7days)

(e) Right to Repair (1, 3 & 7 days) in line with statutory requirements

Repairs which fail to meet the set response time will be highlighted and reasons for the failure will be identified.

- Quality Control/Satisfaction Report

2.4 Monitoring Contd.

10% of completed repair work will be post inspected by the Association to ensure the contractors are achieving the standards set by the Association.

- (a) Where necessary, random repairs selected on the basis of contractors' invoices, will be subject to post inspection to supplement the QC letters in order to achieve the target level of 10%.
 - (b) Quality Control Letter issued, asking the residents to contact the Association to make a suitable access arrangement for the maintenance assistant/officer to inspect the quality of workmanship in relation to recently completed repair work.
 - (c) Quality Satisfaction Questionnaire: seeking the resident's feedback and assessment of the Association and contractors handling of the repair. A target of 50% is set in terms of quality satisfaction questionnaire returns in relation to repair work undertaken in occupied properties.
 - (d) The Association will continue to ensure that the contractor obtains the resident's feedback in relation to the repair, by signing to indicate that the work has been undertaken, and by completing the satisfaction questionnaire on the repair order slip.
- An independent market research company are engaged to undertake repair satisfaction surveys are conducted on a monthly basis, with tenants who have recently used the repairs service. a minimum of 39 surveys will be conducted each month to meet the monitoring requirements of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.
 - Resident Satisfaction Surveys

The Association will analyse feedback from the 3 yearly comprehensive resident satisfaction surveys and consider any maintenance implications, in order to try and improve the service.

2.5 Categories of Repairs and Response Times

The Association recognises the need for a system of repair priorities to distinguish between emergency, urgent and routine works and those which can be tackled as part of planned maintenance programmes.

Repair response times are publicised in the Residents' handbook, annual report and is printed on the repair order.

The Association has in place:

- (a) A system of repair priorities to distinguish between the different categories of repair and those which can be tackled as part of planned maintenance programmes.
- (b) Procedures which record of all maintenance requests received, repair orders instructed and their associated costs.
- (c) Procedures which recognise the individual needs of tenants and not simply on technical grounds. We recognise people with disabilities, mental health problems or illness may require a quicker than usual response.
- (d) Before contractors carry out repairs for people with additional needs they will be advised about any possible additional requirements, e.g. tenants with communication difficulties.

Whilst it is acknowledged that tenants want repairs to be done quickly, certainty about when repairs will be done is more important than speed alone. The Association offer appointments for pre and post inspections and for carrying out repair and maintenance work. The appointment system will allow the Association to provide a more efficient and effective work planning and allocation of staff resources.

2.5.1 Emergency Repairs

Emergency repairs require a quick response and which, if left unattended, could cause injury, or damage to the building fabric. They are generally more expensive than less urgent repairs, particularly when done outside of normal office hours. To achieve value for money the Association will put in place:

2.5.1 Emergency Repairs Contd.

- Publicised examples of what repairs are considered by the Association to constitute an emergency.
- Effective arrangements for reporting, receiving, authorising and carrying out emergency repairs outwith office hours.
- Procedures to ensure that only genuine emergencies are treated as such.
- Well trained staff and contractors who can correctly identify emergencies.
- Systems to monitor the incidence of emergency work.
- Contractor's emergency call out rates.

Arrangements for out of hour's emergency services are in place and these include:

- Answering machine message advising the tenant/resident of emergency contractor's phone numbers.
- Publicised emergency contractors phone numbers.
- Staff contacts for police use.
- Community alarm control centres.

Property damage caused by intruders or perpetrators of violence or harassment are treated as emergencies where the victim's home is insecure. Offensive graffiti will be removed as soon as possible.

Examples of the Association's Emergency Repairs Checklist:

- Fire -Fire Brigade.
- Smell of gas – Scottish Gas Network (SGN).
- Serious Flooding.
- Choked toilet.
- No electricity.

2.5.1 Emergency Repairs Contd.

- No water.
- Property insecure.
- No central heating/hot water.
- Broken window.
- Locked out, no access to house (possible recharge/fee (£60.00) required before works can be instructed/carried out).

The Association will set realistic and challenging targets within which emergency repairs will be carried out. The Association have adopted targets to **attend and make safe** emergency repairs in less than **2 hours**. In this case procedures need to report the time as well as the date of attendance. Examples of emergency repairs are communicated to tenants e.g. website/tenants/repair handbook/newsletter.

The Association will determine its own response targets, however, in doing so it will take account of published benchmark information and industry standards.

2.5.2 Urgent Repairs

Urgent repairs are those which are of a lesser priority than emergency, however, the Association has a target response time of **48 hours**.

Examples of the Association's urgent repairs checklist:

- Choked bath/wash hand basin/sink or external drain.
- Faulty light switch, socket or pendant.
- No hot water.
- Cistern not flushing.
- Faulty lock (when a second lock is operational).
- Faulty smoke alarm.
- Broken door entry system.

2.5.2 Urgent Repairs Contd.

- No close lighting.
- Storm damage (not assessed as an Emergency).

The Association has a clear guidance on what constitutes urgent repairs together with a realistic and challenging target for completion of this type of repair but in doing so, also takes account of published benchmark information.

2.5.3 Routine Repairs

All routine repairs will be attended to within a target timescale of **10 days**. The Association has a clear definition of what constitutes routine repairs together with a realistic and challenging target for completion of this type of repair, and in line with published benchmarks.

2.5.4 Rechargeable Repairs

Tenants have clear responsibilities in respect of the upkeep of their property. These are stated in their tenancy agreement.

Tenants will be expected:

- to keep the interior of the dwelling in good and clean condition and to decorate all internal parts of the dwelling as frequently as is necessary to keep them in reasonable decorative order,
- to make good any damage to the dwelling or to the Association's fixtures and fittings therein, or to the common parts, caused by the tenant or any member of the tenant's household or any visitor to the dwelling, fair wear and tear excepted. Tenants will be expected to pay any costs incurred by the Association, for carrying out such works in default, and
- to report to the Association promptly, any disrepair or defect for which the Association is responsible.

Accidental damage will, when possible, be claimed through the Association's building insurance. Accidental damage not covered by the Association's insurance policy will, be the responsibility of the tenant.

2.5.4 Rechargeable Repairs Contd.

The tenant will be notified of any rechargeable repair work identified by Association staff during inspection/visits and this will be confirmed in writing from the Association within 5 days.

Tenants will be given 28 days to undertake the work necessary to rectify the issue highlighted. An inspection will be carried out within 7 days, at the end of the 28 day period.

If the tenant fails to carry out the work necessary, or if the Association is dissatisfied with the standard of workmanship, the Association will seek the tenant's agreement to meet the costs, by mandate, then instruct a contractor to carry out the work and the tenant will be charged for the expense incurred.

- A letter will be issued to the tenant, outlining the debt/cost owed to the Association, within 14 days of receipt of the invoice for the work involved.
- The tenant will be advised that failure to either carry out the work necessary, or pay the resulting expense incurred by the Association, could jeopardise their tenancy, future references and credit rating.

2.5.5 Right to Repair Repair (see attached table below)

The Scottish Secure Tenants (Right to Repair) Regulations 2002 provided for the introduction of a statutory scheme covering 'All tenants' and recognised that tenants will be compensated when qualifying repairs are not completed within a set maximum period identified in the schedule. It also allows tenants to use another contractor if the originally designated contractor fails to respond within the set period relating to the repair. Qualifying repairs are highlighted in the table below and have a value of less than £350.

2.5.5 Right to Repair Repairs Contd.

Defect	Maximum number of days works to be completed by
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler.	1
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans where there is no other toilet in the house.	1
Blocked sink, bath or drain.	1
Loss of electric power.	1
Partial loss of electric power.	3
Insecure external window, door or lock.	1
Unsafe access path or step	1
Significant leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks, cisterns.	1
Loss or partial loss of gas supply.	1
Loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available.	1
Toilet not flushing where there is no other toilet in the house.	1
Unsafe power or light socket, or electrical fitting.	1
Loss of water supply.	1
Partial loss of water supply.	3
Loose or detached banister or handrail.	3
Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads.	3
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working.	7

2.5.6 Procedure for Notification of and Carrying Out Qualifying Repairs Contd.

Where a tenant applies to the Association for a qualifying repair to be carried out:

- (a) If the Association considers it necessary to inspect the house to ascertain whether the repair is a qualifying repair, the Association shall inspect the house,
- (b) in any case, the Association shall let the tenant know whether the subject of the tenant's application is a qualifying repair and where it is, make arrangements for access with the tenant and provide details of:
 - (i) the maximum period within which the qualifying repair is to be completed,
 - (ii) the last day of that period,
 - (iii) the effect of these Regulations, and
 - (iv) the name, address and telephone number of the primary contractor from the list of contractors maintained by the Association, and
- (c) If the subject of the tenant's application is a qualifying repair, the Association shall issue a works order to the primary contractor and provide details of:
 - (i) the qualifying repair,
 - (ii) the period within which the qualifying repair is the completion date,
 - (iii) the last day of the maximum period, and
 - (iv) the arrangements made for access will be in description.

2.5.6 Procedure for Notification of and Carrying Out Qualifying Repairs Contd.

Where a tenant fails to provide access to a house for the purpose of enabling the qualifying repair to be inspected or carried out, although that tenant has been given a reasonable opportunity to do so, the procedure under regulation 8 shall be cancelled and the provisions of regulations 10 to 13 shall cease to apply.

Where the primary contractor has failed to carry out the qualified repair by the last day of the maximum period the Association shall pay to the tenant a sum of compensation calculated in accordance with paragraph (2).

The amount of compensation shall be the sum of:

(a) £15.00, and

(b) £3.00 for every working day, if any, in the period:

- (i) commencing on the day after the last of what would have been the maximum period if the maximum period had applied to the other listed contractor and had started on the day after the day of receipt of instruction, and
- (ii) ending with the day on which the qualifying repair is completed, subject to a maximum amount of compensation of £100.00.

2.5.7 Void Repairs

The Association will undertake statutory checks in conjunction with essential repairs required to void properties. This work will be done within void repair response time target of 7 days (including Weekends), in order to minimise void repair periods.

There is a need to ensure that policies and working practices, promote close working between maintenance and housing management staff, in order that void repairs and allocations processes happen in tandem wherever possible.

Turnaround times can be shortened if routine repairs are done after the tenant moves in. However, this has to be weighed up against the possible inconvenience to the tenant and the fact that a home in disrepair will be harder to let than one in good condition.

2.5.7 Void Repairs Contd.

There are some repairs which will be done before the tenancy starts. These include:

- Repairs essential to make the property habitable, for health and safety, security, for example gas/electrical safety checks.
- Major Repairs that are planned for the property and can be undertaken within 21 days, for example: kitchen, bathroom, windows (if in stock) and heating replacement. This work will only be feasible within these timescales if there is an appointed contractor on site.
- Removal and replacement (where needed) of substandard unauthorised alterations.

Targets for processing void properties in order to reduce re-let times and repair costs include:

- Pre-termination inspection of the property by housing management staff, in order to identify rechargeable repairs within the termination notice period.
- Condition survey/inspection of newly vacated homes within the agreed timescale of 2 days from receipt of the keys.
- Carrying out repairs within the agreed timescale of 7 days (including weekends) and having taken account of whether there is a danger to health and safety or a risk of damage to building fabric.

The Association sets its own, challenging and realistic targets, within which the respective tasks will aim to be carried out. These targets are set having taken cognisance of factors which will influence the target setting process (e.g. ARC Performance benchmarks, volume/nature of voids, past performance) and will be reviewed regularly.

The Association will set out re-let standards which specify the standard of repair the property will attain at the start of the tenancy. When applicants view a property they will be advised of any work that is required to meet the Association's re-let standard.

2.5 Categories of Repairs and Response Times Contd.

A decoration pack can be offered where an appropriate staff assessment has been made. In some cases where the decoration is particularly poor, the property may be redecorated before being offered for let.

Property re-let standard:

- Condition survey/inspection carried out.
- Gas safety/heating check, current CP12 in place.
- Electrical installation safety check.
- Essential repairs undertaken.
- Outstanding 'Major Repair Work' undertaken.
- Non-essential repairs will be done when possible, within void target timescales, or alternatively listed for the new tenant's notification to be done at their convenience.
- Poor decoration addressed or noted for decoration pack, where appropriate.
- Current Energy Performance Certificate in place.