



# Muirhouse Housing Association

## Policy: Repairs and Maintenance policy

<b>Title of Policy:</b>	Repairs and Maintenance
<b>Date of Adoption or Last Review:</b>	23 September 2019
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Paula Mcvay
<b>Date of Next Review:</b>	August 2022
<b>Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes &amp; Standards:</b>	<p>Standard 2: Communication</p> <p><i>“Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.</i></p> <p>Standard 4: Quality of Housing</p> <p><i>“Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) when they are allocated: are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair; and so meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) BY December 2020.</i></p> <p>Outcome 5: Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements</p> <p><i>“Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done”.</i></p>

### Outcome 13: Value for Money

*“Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that: tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for rent and other charges they pay.”*

### **Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management**

#### Standard 1:

*“The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users”*

#### Standard 2:

*“The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.”*

# Repairs and Maintenance Policy

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 We are committed to providing an efficient repairs and maintenance service for our properties and estates. We aim to concentrate our expenditure on planned maintenance and improvements, and to minimise our expenditure on day to day repairs and reactive maintenance whilst striving to ensure a high level of tenant satisfaction. This policy will be implemented as part of our overall Asset Management Strategy to focus on maximising the useful life of our housing and securing the long term life of our assets.

## 2. Legal Responsibilities and Statutory Obligations

- 2.1 We will comply with all legal and regulatory requirements and will ensure that our maintenance policies and procedures meet our duty of care to our tenants.
- 2.2 Tenants have the right to access information about the terms of their tenancy and about our repairs responsibilities as a landlord. This information is available in their Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement and in our tenants' handbook.

## 3. Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 We aim to provide a high quality Repairs and Maintenance Service through efficient planning and procedures in:

- Reactive Maintenance / Day to Day Repairs
- Planned Maintenance
- Stock Improvements
- Medical Adaptations
- Landscape Maintenance
- Voids

3.2 The main aims and objectives of this policy are

3.3 To maintain our houses to all current standards by:

- operating a system of planned maintenance programming
- meeting the obligations of the Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). This was a target set by the Scottish Government to make sure Social Housing Landlords bring their housing stock up to SHQS standard by April 2015, and keep to this standard.
- The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH), was introduced by the Scottish Government to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. We have worked to achieve the targets set by the Scottish Government for ESSH target milestone of 2020.

- EESSH 2 is beyond 2020, and whereby we meet, or can be treated as meeting an EPC rating of B (Energy Efficiency Rating) or is as energy efficient as practically possible, by December 2032 within the limits of cost, technology and necessary consent.
- To manage the maintenance of open spaces and other common areas which we are responsible for within estate
- To maintain clear property records together with a system for recording reported repairs, works instructed, any insurance details, completion dates and final costs.
- To ensure that our Procurement policy and Strategy are adhered to for the selection of contractors.
- We will consider requests from tenants and professionals, (such as occupational therapists) that would require an adaptation that would assist tenants to live more comfortably in the home, to avoid a need to transfer to another house.

3.4 To provide a prompt and efficient response to repair requests by:

- ensuring that emergencies are made safe speedily and fully repaired promptly and efficiently
- providing a 24 hour contact number for the reporting of emergency repairs outside of normal working hours - evenings, weekends and local holidays
- achieving the target response times set for repair requests
- achieving our service standards under our customer service standards policy with staff adopting a courteous and helpful approach
- achieving the target response times to tenant requests for permission to carry out alterations or improvements to their house
- achieving the target response times for dealing with claims for compensation

3.5 To require that high standards of performance are achieved by all contractors, and develop Right First Time standard.

3.6 To plan the maintenance and renewal of our stock by maximising the life of all the components by:

- taking appropriate action to ensure our houses are in a good, safe, comfortable condition and have fully functioning and effective heating systems
- ensuring void properties are made available for relet in as short a time as possible
- reviewing future requirements to keep our properties desirable in the social rented marketplace

3.7 To plan investment in our stock by:

- carrying out stock condition surveys on a regular basis to assess the condition of the houses

- identifying the potential costs of future major repairs and renewals
- ensuring that adequate funds are available to resource future major repairs and renewals
- to implement a program of upgrading houses based on regularly updated stock condition surveys.

3.8 To provide a high level of customer services by:

- ensuring both staff and tenants are aware of their responsibilities regarding repairs
- keeping tenants, and their representatives, informed about works on their house
- consulting with tenants and their representative groups on any proposed major works
- monitoring repair response times and publicising the results
- ensuring tenants can report repairs in a variety of ways to suit them, in person, by post, telephone, email, online or by text.

3.9 To ensure quality of work and value for money from Contractors by:

- carrying out quality control inspections of repairs on the basis of 5% pre-inspections, 10% post inspections and a sample of works by any new Contractor to ensure they meet sufficient standard
- demonstrating best value for money or fair competition for all works and contracts
- taking account of tenant feedback, check customer views and analyse tenant satisfaction through survey results

#### 4. Target Response Times

4.1 We categorise types of repair with response times as follows:

Repair Type	Type of work	Response time
Emergency	Incidents which cause a safety hazard or make a property uninhabitable (eg fire or flood damage, disruption to electricity, gas, water supply) Contractors will be instructed to attend within 4 hours to make safe Immediately on attendance.	Within 4 hours

Urgent	Faults and incidences that require prompt attention but which do not arise as a result of emergency circumstances will be categorised as Urgent including faulty electrical systems and fittings, leaking pipes, partial loss of water.	Within 2 working days
Routine	All other items of non-urgent work will be categorised as Routine. Contractors shall be instructed to complete the required repair within 10 full working days.	Within 10 days
Right to Repair	Works that are required to meet the Statutory Right to Repair scheme	Tenants will be notified on qualifying time of repair

4.2 When tenants notify us of a repair they will be advised which timescale the repair falls into and the last working day the repair should be completed by.

4.3 Tenants will be notified if delays and exceptions to the above timescales occur. These will be in rare circumstances out with our control such as extreme weather or non-availability of parts and materials.

## 5. Right First Time

5.1 Due to the nature of some repairs, one or more visits maybe planned by the contractor to carry out the works. If the works are delivered as planned and discussed with the tenant, the repair is considered completed right first time. This includes all non-emergency repairs completed during the reporting year with the following exceptions:

- Emergency repairs

- Response repairs where the work will be done as part of cyclical or planned maintenance
- Complex repairs where investigation work needs to be done
- Repairs to voids
- Repair jobs where the tenant has failed to give access as arranged.

5.2 In order to meet the definition of 'completed right first time' a reactive repair must be completed:

- Within the appropriate target timescale agreed locally; and
- Without the need to return a further time because the repair was inaccurately diagnosed and/or, the operative did not resolve the reported problem.
- Where a repair order is to be issued, the order will also provide information on the contractor, job number, target response date, type of repair, access arrangements and whether the repair falls under the Right to Repair scheme.

## **6. Right to Repair**

6.1 Under the Right to Repair scheme, Scottish secure tenants have the right to have small urgent repairs carried out by their landlord within given timescales. When a tenant reports a repair to us, we will let them know whether it is a qualifying repair under the Right to Repair scheme. If the repair does qualify, we will inform tenants of:

- The maximum time allowed to carry out the repair
- The last day of that period
- Explain their rights under the Right to Repair scheme
- Give them the name, address and phone number of their usual contractor and at least one other contractor from a list
- Make arrangements with them to get access to carry out the repair.

6.2 If the repair is not completed within the required timescales, we will pay tenants compensation of £15 plus £3 for every working day over the maximum period until the repair is completed up to a maximum of £100. If the repair is delayed because of circumstances beyond our control (such as severe weather, lack of spare parts etc) we may extend the maximum period and will inform them of this. Also, the right to repair will not apply if the tenant does not give access for the repair to be completed.

## **7. Access Arrangements**

7.1 We may from time to time require access to carry out safety inspections or surveys of the stock condition. We will aim to give tenants a minimum of 14 days' notice of the need for access and will where necessary agree specific access arrangements with the tenant.

7.2 In the event of an emergency, and the tenant being unable to provide immediate access to the property we may make forcible entry without notice. This would be in exceptional circumstances when there was risk of

serious damage to the property or adjacent properties, or the potential for serious injury to neighbouring tenants for example in the event of an escape of gas or fumes, or severe flooding from a burst pipe etc.

## **8. Planned and Cyclical programmes**

8.1 When planned or cyclical maintenance works are programmed we keep tenants informed in the following ways:

8.2 Planned Maintenance

- Our newsletter will list the properties where planned works will be carried out for the following financial year
- Initial notification with brief information on works to be undertaken and the consultant appointed
- Advance project notice with more information on works to be undertaken and how to prepare
- Carers / Relatives Notifications
- Notification of contractor appointed and detailed information on what to prepare, number of workmen attending, time taken, services disrupted, disturbance allowances, Contractor name and contact number, office contacts
- Choice Form
- Delay to contract commencement date / programme delay

8.3 Cyclical Programmes

- For cyclical work tenants will be informed by methods mentioned above. Cyclical programmes are regular programmes of work.
- We plan to paint our common stairs, and areas every 5 years
- Gas Servicing is carried out on a 10 month cycle programme, this allows us assurance that we carry out our legal and regulatory obligation before the yearly anniversary date. We will try to avoid further disruption by carrying out other inspections, or servicing at the same time, for example smoke and heat detector inspections.
- We aim to renew larger planned maintenance works such as kitchens every 15 years, and bathrooms every 25 years. These types of works and frequencies are reviewed yearly during the asset strategy review.
- We will inspect our electrical and air source heating properties at least once every year.

8.4 Consultants and Contractors may contact the tenants directly to arrange suitable access for surveys, project works and final inspections by letter or telephone, text or email.

8.5 Our Technical Inspector will make periodic checks while the works progress, following the Contractors programme and often attending with the Contractors personnel.



## **9. Quality of work**

9.1 In all repair and maintenance works, we will maintain high standards of customer service and expect that:

- All Contractors appointed adopt a positive attitude towards customer service and the prompt resolution of any issues raised by tenants about their work, and abide by our Code of Conduct.
- The site will be kept tidy at all times, any rubbish arising from the works removed and on completion the Contractor leaves the job “as found”
- Use of the tenant’s power, water or other facilities will be with the agreement of the tenant
- The standard of work matches the existing installation or is to the relevant British Standard whichever is higher

9.2 We use a number of methods to ensure that quality of work is to the required standard. These are:

- Formal approval of all contractors prior to any invitation to tender, including seeking references and professional certification
- Post Inspections carried out to test the quality of workmanship and materials used
- Regular review at quarterly Contract Progress Meetings
- Annual review of Contractor performance in conjunction with the review of the Approved List of Contractors

## **10. Tenant Satisfaction**

10.1 A key measure of our success is the satisfaction of our tenants and customers with the Service we provide. We welcome feedback from our tenants and our customers about the service being delivered, and we will act and record any complaints and remedy any problem and record and learn from them. We will also record positive feedback.

10.2 Tenants are encouraged to feedback to us their views on the performance on contractors and consultants. We provide a number of routes for tenants to express their views and concerns on satisfaction:

- Contracted Works such as planned maintenance and medical adaptations
- Reactive Maintenance
- Gas and cyclical Servicing & Repair Work
  - Other General Methods / Independent Surveys

## **11. Customer Satisfaction Surveys**

11.1 We will gather survey information to find out tenants views and levels of satisfaction with the works including:

- Access arrangements

- Quality of workmanship
  - Contractors performance / standard of service provided by the Contractor
  - Outstanding works / defects
  - Timescale achieved
  - Response received from / effectiveness of Contractor or Association staff
- 11.2 All surveys are issued with a covering letter and indicate if a prize draw is available for completed returns. We also include a pre-addressed postage paid envelope to return all completed questionnaires. We may also use other communication such as text, telephone or by email to gather survey information.
- 11.3 Outcomes from all survey responses received are collated with specific reference to:
- Concerns with works carried out
  - Negative responses highlighted
  - Any necessary remedial action taken
  - Any necessary system improvements
  - To gather positive feedback on things that are good or working well
- 11.4 We undertake a telephone survey for a sample of tenants having emergency or call-out repairs, to ask their views about the service.
- 11.5 Where repair works are identified as requiring a post inspection the Technical Inspector will carry out a detailed inspection:
- to confirm satisfaction with the work carried out
  - Whether any additional works will be required
  - arrange follow on works with Contractor
  - re-inspect if necessary
- 11.6 Outcomes including complaints and positive feedback are reported in the Quarterly Performance Reports to the Board of Management, and to the Scottish Housing Regulator every year.
- 12. Chargeable Repairs**
- 12.1 MHA recognises that there may be occasions when a tenant requests that a repair is carried out when it is the responsibility of the tenant. We may agree to such requests, when a tenant reports a repair and it is their responsibility, and they request we carry out the work we will explain that it may be chargeable.
- 12.2 Rechargeable repairs are where damage has been deliberate or by neglect to the property by the tenant or their visitors.

### **13. Payments and Benefits**

- 13.1 All prize draws with cash, voucher or other prizes for return of completed survey questionnaires, will operate in strict accordance with our Entitlement, Payments and Benefits Policy.
- 13.2 In this respect, tenant members of the Board of Management are included in the satisfaction statistics and any prize draw when they answer and return their survey questionnaires. If a tenant member of the Board of Management should win the random draw, details will be recorded on our Entitlement, Payments and Benefits register of the name, address and prize received.

### **14. Equality, diversity and inclusion**

- 14.1 We aim to promote equality and diversity and operate equal opportunities policies which inform all aspects of our business. We will ensure that we adhere to the Equality Act 2010 by being committed to fair treatment for all and opposed to any form of unlawful discrimination. No one will be treated less favourably than others because of any of the protected characteristics as listed in the Equality Act 2010:

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- marriage and civil partnership
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation;

- 14.2 Upon request, we will make information about our Unacceptable Actions Policy and procedures available in alternative formats, such as large print, audio, Braille, and community languages.

### **15. Confidentiality, data protection & rights of access**

- 15.1 All information provided to us by individuals will be treated in strict confidence and will only be discussed with other parties with the individual's (or their appointed representative's) prior consent. We will comply with the Data Protection Act 1998 and the General Data Protection Regulation 2016 when holding personal information in our files and on our computer systems.
- 15.2 We will adhere to The Access to Personal Files Act 1987 which gives individuals the right of access to personal information about themselves held on file.

**16. Anti-bribery**

16.1 We are committed to the highest standards of ethical conduct and integrity in all our activities. In order to ensure compliance with the Bribery Act 2010, the anti – bribery policy and the fraud and corruption policy must be adhered to by all employees, Board Members and associated persons or organisations acting for us or on our behalf when undertaking any actions referred to in this policy.

**17. Policy review**

17.1 This policy will be reviewed every 3 years unless key changes are required earlier to comply with legislation, guidance or new learning.

17.2 As part of this review, consultation will take place with staff and customers to ensure that operational issues and the opinions of customers are taken into account.

17.3 The effectiveness of accompanying procedures and guidance will be monitored on a regular basis and, where applicable, amended as required operationally; or to reflect legislative changes.