

PARAGON HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

POLICY: REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE

POLICY AREA: HOUSING MANAGEMENT

DATE APPROVED: 21/1/09

DATE NEXT REVIEW: JANUARY 2014

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Objectives**
- 3. Legal Requirements**
- 4. Procurement**
- 5. Reactive Maintenance**
- 6. Right to Repair**
- 7. Deferred Repairs**
- 8. Ordering A Repair**
- 9. Inspections**
- 10. Planned Maintenance**
- 11. Annual Servicing of Heating Installations**
- 12. Medical Adaptation**
- 13. Information to Tenants**
- 14. Scottish Housing Quality Standard**
- 15. Equal Opportunities**
- 16. Contractor/Consultant Selection**
- 17. Customer Satisfaction**
- 18. Complaints**
- 19. Review**

1. Introduction

This policy outlines the broad principles that will be used by the Association in the completion of reactive repairs, cyclical and planned maintenance, medical adaptations, void repairs and servicing of heating.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Association's Repairs and Maintenance Policy are to:

- ensure its tenants live in safe, decent homes in a safe decent environment;

- deliver its planned maintenance and improvement programme broadly in accordance with commitments made to tenants;
- ensure that its houses comply with Health and Safety requirements;
- ensure that its houses comply with the Scottish Housing Quality Standard as appropriate;
- ensure that void properties are repaired and re-let as quickly as possible to minimise the rent loss to the Association;
- carry out all repairs within the published timescales;
- maximise the useful life of the stock;
- ensure that tenants have clear information about the maintenance policy, including the procedures to be followed and the target response times;
- ensure that the Association's staff and its contractors deliver a high standard of customer care;
- provide the Management Committee with a suite of reports to enable them to control and monitor the maintenance function;
- consult with tenants and residents in decisions about the service.

Maintenance may not always involve simply "like for like" renewals. The updating of legislated standards, required improvements in performance, conversions or regeneration may be implemented to maintain the housing stock as a valuable asset to the Association and the community.

3. Legal Requirements

The Association must maintain its stock in line with legal requirements. In addition to statutory duties it has a common law "duty of care" towards its tenants.

This Policy is designed to comply with Performance Standards for Social Landlords and Homelessness Functions.

Tenancy Agreement

The Association's Scottish secure tenancy agreement set out the legal rights, duties, and obligations of both the Association and the tenant.

Schedule 7 Payments & Benefits

The Association will at all times ensure that it complies with the conditions set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 regarding the benefits and payments which can be granted to committee and staff members.

4. Procurement

The procurement of services in relation to the repairs and maintenance function shall

be undertaken in accordance with the Association's Procurement Policy.

5. Reactive Maintenance

Reactive Maintenance covers the day-to-day repairs which are of an emergency, urgent or routine nature and which cannot be left to the next cycle of planned maintenance without posing a threat to the safety, health and security of the tenant and public, the deterioration of the building or the Association's repair obligations, as defined by statute or through the tenancy agreement.

In order to give a speedy responsive and clearly understandable service, repairs have been categorised as "emergency", "urgent", "routine" or "void house repair".

Emergency Repairs

This category relates to damage which could affect the health, safety or security of the tenant, or damage to the fabric of the building, if the repair is not attended to immediately. Repairs in this category must be responded to within two hours to make them safe. Where the repair cannot be completed immediately (e.g. because a part needs to be obtained) the follow up repair will be ordered as an urgent or routine repair in the usual manner.

The following are examples which demonstrate an emergency repairs situation:

- The effect of a fire where the tenant or property may be at risk.
- Escape of water within a building.
- Choked wc.
- Immediate danger due to damage or deterioration of the fabric of a building e.g. crumbling chimney stack.
- An electrical hazard or complete loss of electrical power or lighting.
- Making safe glazing in high risk areas e.g. certain common areas in flats.
- Missing/non working smoke alarms (excluding renewal of batteries which are the tenant's responsibility.)

Under Jobbing Repair Contracts (JRW), emergency calls incur a higher charge. In other cases contractors will also charge extra for calls outside normal working hours, or to any other emergency.

Should a tenant give false information in order to obtain an emergency response, a recoverable charge must be considered for the excess cost in accordance with the Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

Details of any emergency callouts are logged on the system following notification by the contractor. The Contractor should notify the Association's staff on the next

working day following the call out.

Urgent Repairs

This category relates to the removal of a health hazard, a hazard to safety or repairs which are not an emergency but which cannot wait for inclusion as routine. Repairs in this category must be completed within three working days of notification.

The following are examples of urgent repairs:

- Partial loss of power.
- Loose/detached internal banister.
- Most roof leaks.
- Unsafe floorboards/stair treads.
- Partial loss of water supply.

Routine Repairs

These are non-emergency repairs or replacements in response to reported defects or damage accepted by the Association as statutory obligations.

Electrical and glazing repairs are to be carried out within 5 working days; plumbing repairs, joiner and builder work within 10 working days.

The following are examples of routine repairs:

- Repairs to doors and windows (other than RTR 1 day repairs)
- Roughcast repairs.
- Certain electrical repairs - battens, lampholders etc.
- Certain roof repairs - rhones, gutters, slates, ridges etc (where there is no immediate water penetration).
- Boundary walls and fences where there is no safety hazard.

Glazing repairs to common non-occupied parts of buildings e.g. stair windows, where there is no safety hazard.

Void House Repairs

This category covers all repairs required to an empty property to bring it to the Association's lettable standard. The Association aims to relet void properties as quickly as possible. All such repairs which are necessary to relet the house are to be completed, when possible, within either 5 or 10 working days.

Minor items not required before the house can be relet can be done as normal routine

repairs once re-let. The tenant must be informed of any such repairs outstanding, and that they will be done within the routine response times. (For further information see Void Management Policy)

6. Right to Repair

The Association operates the Right to Repair scheme as outlined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and qualifying repairs are dealt with in accordance with the response category. (For further information see Right to Repair Policy)

7. Deferred Repairs

This includes repairs which the Association has agreed with the Contractor as those which can be left to a mutually convenient time. For example, repairs which do not directly affect the tenant's use of his/her home and which can be carried out more effectively in bulk.

The tenant will be informed that the repair has been deferred and that they will be contacted when the work will be carried out.

8. Ordering A Repair

The Association operates a computerised repairs system and repairs are reported to the contractor via an electronic link.

Staff ordering repairs should obtain from the tenant, their telephone number and as much information as is required to provide the contractor with an accurate description of the work which requires to be carried out and which will enable the allocation of an appropriate priority category.

Tenants should be advised of the category of the repairs, the timescale for the work being completed and that they must keep the agreed access arrangements or they may be charged for abortive/no access visits.

Where strict adherence to policy would result in undue hardship, the Housing Manager may exercise discretion in the use of repairs categories.

Repairs which are outwith the target date should not have their status changed or re-issued in order to improve the target date. If a repair requires the replacement of a component, which has an extended delivery period taking completion of the work beyond the response time requirements, the contractor should immediately advise the Association. The contractor should advise when the component will be available and the date on which the repair will be completed. An extension of time may be granted or the original works order cancelled with a new order being raised with the agreement of both parties. The tenant must be advised of any delay and the new timescale for

the work being completed.

9. Inspections

Pre-inspection

There will be times when a pre-inspection will be carried out by technical staff to establish the extent of a repair before it can be carried out.

Tenants should be advised of the timescale for the visit being carried and that they should keep to the agreed access arrangements.

Post Repair Inspection

A target will be set annually for the percentage of all completed repairs to be post inspected by the Association's Maintenance Officer. This is considered an essential part of monitoring to ensure that repairs meet specifications, have been carried out to the Association's satisfaction and are value for money.

All re-let properties and medical adaptations will be post inspected.

For the purposes of the Gas Safety Inspections the Association will employ a Gas Safety specialist to carry out ad hoc post inspections.

10. Planned Maintenance

The Association shall adopt a comprehensive Planned Maintenance system based on a 6 year cycle for the inspection and works stages.

The purpose of the inspections is to determine the condition of property elements and to indicate what remedial work is required. It is important to note that the inspector is assessing whether an element/component can be retained or will perform satisfactorily until the next inspection in the 6 year cycle.

Planned Maintenance deals with the natural deterioration of building components and finishes. The process is largely predictable and is, therefore, capable of being the subject of forward planning. Planned maintenance is cyclical in that the maintenance process will have to be repeated at regular intervals during the life of the building.

It is essentially preventative or protective and includes the replacement or repair of components which have come to the end of their useful economic life.

Responsibility for funding Planned Maintenance lies with the Association. Planned Maintenance is one of the largest single items of expenditure for the Association it is therefore essential that the future programmes are effectively planned.

11. Annual Servicing of Heating Installations

The Association maintains detailed records about the heating systems in every property and information about service dates. All gas heating installations will be serviced annually by an approved contractor. The Programme and Regeneration Manager will be responsible for the appointment of qualified contractors to carry out this work. Copies of relevant certificates and other data are held in the Association's filing system. (For Gas heating see the Gas Servicing Policy)

12. Medical Adaptations

Medical adaptations are works carried out to individual properties to help tenants who, for medical reasons, require works to their properties such as walk in showers, installation of handrails etc. The local Occupational Therapists carry out the assessments for the Association and prioritise works.

Annually the Association will set aside a budget to carry out medical adaptations and also make application to the Housing Investment Division of the Scottish Government for HAG Stage 3 funding.

13. Scottish Housing Quality Standard

The Scottish Executive introduced the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) in 2004. It sets out the minimum standard that all homes in the social rented sector are expected to meet by 2015.

In order to meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard, all houses must:

- be compliant with the Tolerable Standard
- be free from serious disrepair
- be energy efficient
- have Modern Facilities and Services
- be healthy, safe and secure

The Association has submitted a Standard Delivery Plan to the Housing Investment Division of the Scottish Government detailing how the Association will comply with the

standards identified within the SHQS.

The items identified within the Standard Delivery Plan have been incorporated into the Association's 30 year Planned Maintenance Projections to achieve the Standard by April 2015.

14. Information to Tenants

The Association will ensure that tenants have clear information about the Repairs and Maintenance Policy. The responsibilities of both the Association and the tenant are set out in Section 5 of the Scottish secure tenancy agreement.

The Association's Tenants Handbook is issued to all tenants and contains a section on Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements.

Details of the Association's repairs and maintenance responsibilities can be found in the Tenants Handbook and in the Division of Repairs Responsibility Policy. The Association will endeavour to consult and involve tenants in decisions affecting the repairs service.

15. Equal Opportunities

The Association operates an Equal Opportunities Policy which applies to all aspects of the Association's work to ensure fair and non discriminatory practice.

16. Contractor/Consultant Selection

The Association maintains a list of approved contractors and consultants to undertake maintenance and specialist works. This helps to ensure that only qualified and experienced contractors, with proven safety records are appointed, who comply with wider policy objectives such as the use of local labour and equal opportunities.

17. Customer Satisfaction

The Association is committed to monitoring and evaluating customer satisfaction with its services. Staff will issue survey questionnaires to a sample of tenants who have had a repair carried out in their home. The results of the surveys will be reported to the Management Committee.

18. Complaints

Complaints against its handling of individual repairs will be processed through the Association's Complaints procedures. Any customer who feels there has been personal injustice as a result of bad, inefficient or improper administration will be able to complain to the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. Details of the

Ombudsman's service will be available in the office.

19. Monitoring

Key Performance Indicators

Annually the Management Committee will set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for repairs. The KPIs will be reported to the Management Committee on a quarterly basis.

Monthly Reports

The Housing Manager and Programme & Regeneration Manager will submit monthly reports to the relevant sub committee on the performance in relation to repairs in respect of:

- Actual response times against agreed timescales
- Overall repairs budget
- Post and pre-inspections carried out
- Details of progress on gas servicing programme
- SHQS - Surveying progress report
- Financial monitoring of progress on requested for medical adaptations and progress.
- Details of programme expenditure
- Breakdown of programme

Annual Reports

The Programme and Regeneration Manager will also submit an annual progress report on work carried out towards meeting the SHQS.

20. Review

This policy will be reviewed every 5 years. However, it may be reviewed earlier, if there are changes in legislation, processes or guidance.