



PROPERTY SERVICES – STANDARDS AND REPAIRS SERVICE

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Associated Policies:

Rechargeable Repairs
Right to Repair
Right to Compensation

Gas Servicing
Procurement
Void Management

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HILLHEAD HOUSING ASSOCIATION 2000

Policy - Property Services – Standards and Repairs Service

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Association places great importance on its repairs service that it offers to tenants and realises the importance of carrying out necessary and essential repairs in order to protect the value and long term condition of the stock.
- 1.2 The Association will observe at all times, relevant Health and Safety and legislative requirements and current recommendations on best practice.

2. POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Association is committed to providing a high quality, efficient and effective repairs and maintenance service which meets the following objectives:

- (i) To provide for all tenants and other service users fairly and equitably.
- (ii) To optimise the useful life of the properties, including implementing and co-ordinating an effective cyclical maintenance programme
- (iii) To provide an effective, cost effective and responsive reactive repairs service to tenants.
- (iv) To establish and maintain effective repairs and maintenance procedures.
- (v) To provide sufficient, appropriately trained staff and adequate administrative resources to implement this policy efficiently and effectively.
- (vi) To ensure that the required service is provided within the available budget.
- (vii) To ensure that there is proper control of policy and performance standards set by the Management Committee.
- (viii) To respond positively to changing needs and standards.
- (ix) To adopt legally correct and good practice at all times.
- (x) To involve tenants in the process wherever possible.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR POLICY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1 The Management Committee has overall responsibility for approving the policy and performance standards of the repairs service.
- 3.2 Responsibility for implementation of policy and procedures is delegated to the Property Services Manager.
- 3.3 The Association, as an employer, also has responsibility to ensure appropriate staffing levels and the provision of training and resources to enable the implementation of this policy.

4. LANDLORD RESPONSIBILITIES

In carrying out its obligations as an owner and landlord, the Association will:

- 4.1 Meet all legal requirements as defined in the relevant Housing (Scotland) Acts, Health and Safety and other relevant legislation.
- 4.2 Maintain and repair its housing stock to the standards specified and approved by the Association, in respect of those areas listed as the landlord's responsibility in the Tenancy Agreement.
- 4.3 Maintain adequate insurance of its housing and other buildings and open space for which it has legal responsibility as owner and landlord.

5. TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Association will ensure that:

- 5.1 All tenants are made aware of their responsibility to report promptly, all repairs to the Association as described in the Tenancy Agreement.
- 5.2 Tenants are made aware of their responsibility to make good repairs and damage to the areas shown below which are listed as the tenants' responsibility in the Tenancy Agreement.
 - internal decoration
 - damage to glass (unless it is the result of vandalism by people other than the tenant or those the tenant is responsible for)
 - lost or damaged or broken keys
 - repairs arising from forced entry – resulting from key loss
 - non-accidental damage to sinks or sanitary ware
 - non-accidental choked sinks or sanitary ware
 - batteries for smoke alarms other than if replaced by the Association annually as part of an agreed cyclical maintenance programme
 - waste plugs/chains for baths, wash hand basins and sinks
 - pest control (all as outlined within Estate Management Policy)

- any repair/replacement which is the result of damage/loss caused by misuse, vandalism, carelessness or negligence committed by the tenant, members of their household or visitors for whom they are responsible
- 5.3 Tenants are made aware of their responsibility for the general upkeep of the interior of their houses in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement.
- 5.4 In appropriate circumstances carry out repairs for which the tenant is responsible for on their behalf and:
- recharge them for the cost of the work, including an appropriate sum to cover administration costs (all in accordance with the Rechargeable Repairs Policy)
- 5.5 Tenants vandalising or misusing Association property will be recharged for the cost of repairs resulting from acts of vandalism and misuse by them, members of their household, visitors or by people they are responsible for.
- 5.6 Tenants are made aware of their responsibility (included in the Tenancy Agreement) to report all acts of vandalism or criminal activity which results in damage to Association property to the police within 24 hours. This includes the necessity to quote a crime reference number given to them by the Police as verification that it has been reported to them in the first instance. Failure to provide a crime reference number will result in a recharge of the cost of the repairs to the tenants.

6. DELIVERY OF THE REPAIRS SERVICE

6.1 Repair Standards

The Association will:

- 6.1.1 Prepare and regularly update the performance specifications for the maintenance of the housing stock taking account of best practice and current Building Regulations.
- 6.1.2 Regularly review these specifications.
- 6.1.3 Pre-inspect no less than 15% of all repairs, including any repair anticipated to cost in excess of £250. (Refer to separate pre inspection criteria).
- 6.1.4 Post inspect no less than 15% of all repairs, including all repairs over £250 to ensure that quality standards and value for money are being met. (Refer to separate post inspection criteria).
- 6.1.5 Set target response times (KPIs) for staff and contractors (refer to 6.3.2) and monitor the performance of staff and contractors in meeting the target response times continuously.

6.1.6 Only employ term contractors that offer an appointments service and monitor continuously

6.1.7 Continually monitor tenant satisfaction with the repairs service and workmanship of the contractors

6.2 Right To Repair

Specific entitlements to repairs and a Right to Repair scheme are set out in Section 27 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. Further details are set out in Scottish Statutory Instrument 2002-03 Number 316 – “Right to Repair”.

The Association has its own “Right to Repair Policy”. All tenants will be advised annually, in writing, of this policy and of the landlord and tenants` rights in respect of the policy.

The Policy reflects the Association’s commitment to ensuring tenants receive a quality repairs service and that the Association complies with the legislation.

In adopting this policy, the Association will:

6.2.1 Ensure tenants are made aware of the provisions of the Right to Repair legislation.

6.2.2 Ensure the timescales specified for carrying out the works are expressed in writing to all contractors providing the Association with a service.

6.2.3 Ensure that all contractors carrying out repairs are made fully aware of the expectations of them in regard to qualifying repairs.

6.2.4 Ensure all contractors are aware that the Association will recover costs incurred under the Scheme from them where appropriate.

6.2.5 Ensure appropriate deductions are made from contractors’ accounts if and when necessary.

6.2.6 Monitor the level of failure to meet the terms of the Scheme and take appropriate action.

6.2.7 Ensure that tenants are recompensed as appropriate under the terms of the legislation.

6.3 Reactive Repairs

All repairs will be categorised using the following three groups:

Emergency Repairs: Are those where there is a risk to safety, danger to health and to prevent serious damage to the building or total loss of services to the tenant.

Urgent Repairs: Are those where there is a partial loss of a service to the tenant that seriously affects the comfort or convenience of the tenant or where not carrying out the repair will result in further damage to the property.

Routine Repairs: Are those that do not seriously interfere with the comfort and convenience of the tenant and cause further problems to the property.

All tenants will be made fully aware of these categories:

- i) through their Tenancy Agreement
- ii) through information leaflets
- iii) following identification of the nature and extent of any specific repair required.

The Association will:

6.3.1 Operate an appropriate computerised system for the processing of repairs. All repairs will be accurately recorded, acknowledged, inspected where appropriate and checked all within the approved timescales. Tenants will receive confirmation of all reported repairs by means of a tenant satisfaction survey form.

6.3.2 Aim to meet the following targets for the completion of repairs.

Emergency Repairs: Will be 'made safe' within 2 hours and the service restored within 24 hours.

Urgent Repairs: Will be completed within 3 working days.

Routine Repairs: Will be completed within 10 working days.

6.3.3 Monitor the performance of staff in achieving these targets and review the process on a regular basis.

6.3.4 Monitor the performance of contractors continuously in terms of agreed KPIs, in particular, in relation to the reactive maintenance contractor and gas servicing and repairs contractor where the following KPIs have been agreed:

- Emergency 100%
- Urgent 95%
- Routine 95%

6.3.5 Monitor the average response time of term contractors to complete emergency and non-emergency repairs

6.3.6 Inform tenants of the status of cancelled job orders and the reasons for cancelling.

6.4 Cyclical Works/Planned Maintenance

The Association will carry out, no more than every five years, a stock condition survey to establish the current condition of the stock.

The stock condition survey will be utilised to develop 30 year life cycle costings. Such life cycle costings will identify and incorporate cyclical/planned maintenance related works.

Cyclical Works

The Association will:

- 6.4.1 Prepare and implement appropriate cyclical programmes to ensure safety to tenants and pro actively maintain the stock to the best of its ability in terms of gas servicing programmes, gas audits, smoke detector periodic checks, CO detector checks, 5 yearly electrical checks (including common stair lighting and office), gutter cleaning, painting, landscape maintenance, including regularly inspecting and maintaining any non adopted play equipment, which are the responsibility of the Association. Check play equipment and carry out ROSPA checks monthly.
- 6.4.2 Review these programmes annually and in conjunction with the preparation of the annual budget available.
- 6.4.3 Ensure sufficient funding is available to finance the provision of all essential cyclical maintenance, including updating the life cycle costing as required.
- 6.4.4 Continually monitor costs associated with cyclical works to ensure that in the medium to long term, the Association has sufficient future funds available for their provision.

Planned Maintenance

The Association will:

- 6.4.5 Prepare a Planned Maintenance Programme, identifying major building components which are due to reach the end of their expected life span and will soon require to be replaced. Components include kitchens, bathrooms, windows, doors and boilers etc.
- 6.4.6 Regularly review these programmes in conjunction with life cycle costing information and stock condition survey findings
- 6.4.7 Ensure sufficient funding is available to finance the provision of planned maintenance, including updating life cycle costings.
- 6.4.8 Monitor costs associated with planned maintenance (large component replacement) works, to ensure that, in the medium to long term, the Association has sufficient future funds available.

6.4.9 Ensure all works take cognisance of and meets the requirements of Scottish Housing Quality Standards and any other appropriate regulatory standard.

6.4.10 It may be necessary on occasion to have to replace a component earlier than planned, where the component has failed and is outwith economical repair. Consideration of the following will be taken into account.

- Cost of repairing the component against replacement
- How long the repair would be expected to last
- Timescale of replacement of component via the Planned Maintenance Programme

6.5 Medical Adaptations

The Association will:

6.5.1 Establish the annual Stage 3 allowance available from Scottish Government as part of its Grant Planning Target.

6.5.2 Instruct works following relevant, Scottish Government guidance and within the budget approved by Scottish Government.

6.5.3 Regularly update, spend versus budget.

6.5.4 Carry out stage 3 Adaptation work where funding is available to do so and following receipt of a referral form from Social Work.

6.5.5 In the event that all grant is exhausted, only instruct adaptations following discussion and approval from the Management Committee.

6.5.6 Monitor the average completion time to complete an adaptation following receipt of the Social Work referral and confirmation of funding from Scottish Government

6.6 Repair Budgets

The Association will:

6.6.1 Set annual budgets taking full account of the previous year's expenditure in relation to both reactive and cyclical works and taking account of all life cycle costing information.

6.6.2 Liaise closely with the Finance Department to monitor ongoing spend, including details contained within Management Accounts.

6.6.3 Report detailed spend quarterly to the Management Committee via Management Accounts and via Property Services reports to the Management Committee.

6.7 Emergencies

The Association will:

- 6.7.1 Establish and monitor constantly, procedures for dealing with emergencies both during and out with normal working hours. These procedures will define call-out arrangements and levels of authority to act and will be clearly explained to all staff directly or indirectly responsible for maintenance work.
- 6.7.2 Ensure that the procedures for dealing with an emergency within the office, detailed in the Health & Safety Policy, are followed at all times including such items as intruder alarms, office opening, fire safety, festive season procedures etc.
- 6.7.3 Make available to tenants, clear information on dealing with an emergency, covering:
 - (i) The action a tenant should take
 - (ii) Procedures for contacting;
 - Electricity transmission body
 - Gas Distributor body
 - Water Authority
 - Police, Fire, Ambulance Services
 - Social Services
 - Emergency repair contractors, including properties in defects
- 6.7.4 Ensure that all staff with responsibility for dealing with emergencies have an up-to-date list of appropriate telephone numbers.
- 6.7.5 Ensure that emergency services and contractors are given the name and contact number of any staff member to be called in the event of an emergency.
- 6.7.6 Recharge tenants in cases where they have used Association contractors to have repairs done which were not genuine emergencies or were the tenant's responsibility in accordance with the Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

6.8 Insurance

The Association will:

- 6.8.1 Advise all tenants of the availability of an appropriate contents insurance policy scheme, which:
 - Cover general risk, in particular house contents insurance.
 - Allow tenants to pay in instalments.
 - Offer good value for money.

6.8.2 Maintain comprehensive building insurance on all properties owned by the Association.

6.9 Rechargeable Repairs

The Association will adhere to its “Rechargeable Repairs” policy as and when required.

6.10 Alterations and Improvements

If the Association receives requests from tenants for alterations or improvements, the Association will follow its Policy on Alterations and Improvements. All tenants will be advised of this policy and of the landlord and tenants’ rights in respect of the policy.

The Association has developed a standard form which will require being completed and submitted by the tenant for consideration by the Association.

The Association will:

6.10.1 Ensure all tenants are aware that, before any work is undertaken, they must apply in writing for permission to improve/alter their home;

- (i) to the Association
- (ii) to all other necessary organisations (such as Building Control, Planning etc) as applicable to the alteration or improvement works proposed.

6.10.2 Not unreasonably withhold such permission but may attach conditions to the consent in relation to the factors set out in 6.10.5 below.

6.10.3 Respond in writing within 15 working days of a written request being received giving the Association’s decision, and:

- where a decision cannot be given within 15 working days, advise the tenant of the delay, and reasons for this
- where permission is not given, advise the tenant of the reasons for the refusal and how to appeal via the Association’s complaints procedure.
- Outline to the tenant that they will have to confirm once the alteration/improvement has been carried out so that a post inspection can take place by the Association

6.10.4 All tenants refused permission will have the right to appeal against the decision in line with the Association’s complaints procedure.

- 6.10.5 When considering a request to alter a property, take into account a range of factors including:
- any impact on the future lettable of the property
 - the permanency of the alteration and the ability to reinstate the original position
 - future maintenance liability
- 6.10.6 Ensure that all alterations or improvements are:
- inspected before work starts and inspected on completion to ensure conditions have been met
 - recorded in the property files
- 6.10.7 Not take such alterations/improvements into account when determining rent levels, during that tenancy
- 6.10.8 Adhere to the Association's policy "Compensation for Tenants Improvements" at the end of a tenancy.

6.11 Procurement

The Association will adhere to EU legislation at all times and seek advice as and when required from its solicitors in relation to appropriate advertising. The Association will take account, of the "Procurement Policy" at all times. Once approved contractors have been identified, works will be instructed and paid for in accordance with the Financial Procedures Policy. (Relevant abstract appended).

7. SERVICE STANDARDS

The Association will, by means of regular newsletters, leaflets and via the Association's website:

- 7.1 Make available to all tenants, current, relevant information on its repair procedures. This information will include the Association's response times, procedures for reporting repairs - including emergencies, rechargeable repairs, tenant alterations and all other relevant matters. Advise tenants on the Association's performance by comparing this to the Scottish averages as confirmed by The Scottish Housing Regulator annually.
- 7.2 Make details available to tenants of the Association's Complaints Procedure and of remedies to tenants. (Refer to the "Complaints Policy").
- 7.3 Ensure that staff and contractors dealing directly with tenants, follow the Association's code of conduct.

- 7.4 Provide appropriate training to ensure that Property Services' staff members are suitably qualified and confident to provide the required level of service.
- 7.5 Establish procedures to define the responsibilities and roles of staff supplying property maintenance services and ensure that information is correctly and timeously given to all relevant staff members.
- 7.6 Where planned renewal works are taking place, act on behalf of owners where desirable to the Association and to protect the Association's stock in terms of external works. Only instruct the works on behalf of owners where owners have signed Minutes of Agreement.
- 7.7 Encourage feedback from tenants and staff as part of its commitment to continuously improve its service. The Association will monitor and report to Committee on the results of Tenant Satisfaction Questionnaires for all repairs reported by tenants quarterly.

8. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

- 8.1 The Management Committee has delegated responsibility for ensuring that this policy is implemented to the required standards.
- 8.2 The Association will set up procedures to ensure that the performance of the Property Services function is carried out to the required standards of the Association.
- 8.3 The Property Services Manager will report quarterly to the Management Committee on contractors' performance against agreed timescales, performance targets and standards and include reference to Scottish averages as confirmed by The Scottish Housing Regulator.
- 8.4 Bi-monthly review meetings will be held with all term contractors, including the reactive repairs contractor, landscape maintenance contractor and gas servicing and repairs contractor. Meetings will be chaired and minuted by the Association.

9. FINANCIAL CONTROL

- 9.1 An annual maintenance budget, as part of the overall budget, will be approved by the Management Committee. In preparing its budget, the Property Services Team will, to the best of its ability, ensure that adequate spend is recommended to safeguard the stock in the long term. This will include ensuring that value-for-money is taken on board at all times.
- 9.2 Monthly monitoring of expenditure on repairs will be carried out.
- 9.3. Quarterly meetings will be held with the Finance Officer to review and monitor spend following completion of quarterly accounts.
- 9.4 As confirmed above, the authority to instruct works and authorise invoices will be in line with the Financial Procedures Policy.

10. RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- 10.1 It should be assumed that all policies referred to in this policy and any other relevant current procedures and policies of Hillhead Housing Association 2000 will apply in respect of this policy. They will include but are not limited to:

- Right To Repair
- Right To Compensation
- Finance Regulations
- Rechargeable Repairs
- Equal Opportunities
- Complaints
- Procurement

11. POLICY REVIEW

Hillhead Housing Association 2000 will:

- 11.1 Regularly review all aspects of this policy, including procedures and actual practice to ensure the effective, economic, efficient and fair implementation of repair and maintenance services in all areas.
- 11.2 All amendments to this policy will be submitted to the Management Committee for approval.
- 11.3 Review this policy no less than every 3 years or as required.

12. RESPONSIBILITY

The Property Services Manager will be responsible for ensuring this policy is implemented, monitored and reviewed as required.

Property Services Authorisation:

AUTHORITY TO INSTRUCT WORKS

AMOUNT	DESIGNATION
Up to £250	Property Services Assistant/Property Services Officer
£251 - £1,500	Property Services Officer
£1,501 - £5,000	Property Services Officer with authorisation of Property Services Manager
£5,001 - £10,000	Invite 3 quotes
£10,001 and over	Formal tender procedures

AUTHORITY TO AUTHORISE INVOICES

AMOUNT	DESIGNATION
Up to £250	Checked by Property Services Assistant and then authorised by Property Services Officer
£251 - £5,000	Checked by Property Services Officer and then authorised by Property Services Manager
£5,001 and over	Checked by Property Services Officer and then authorised by Property Services Manager

PRE INSPECTION CRITERIA

The following repairs will be pre-inspected:

- Where it is anticipated that the cost of the repair will be in excess of £250
- Where it is unclear from what the tenant has said, the nature of the repair
- Where it is thought that the repair may be easily resolved, without the expense of involving a contractor, following an inspection by a Property Services Officer
- Where it is thought that the repair may be as a result of tenant neglect/act of vandalism
- All OT referrals in terms of Stage 3 works
- All requests made by tenants in terms of alterations and improvements if there is any doubt on the alteration proposed

Notwithstanding the above, the Association will pre-inspect no less than 15% of repairs notified.

POST INSPECTION CRITERIA

The following repairs will be post inspected:

- Where the cost of the repair is in excess of £250
- Where it is thought that the contractor's price appears excessive in terms of the repair works carried out
- Where the tenant has indicated dissatisfaction with the way in which the repair has been made good, including dissatisfaction in terms of workmanship
- All stage 3 adaptation works
- All insurance related works
- All improvements/alterations carried out by tenants

Notwithstanding the above, the Association will post inspect no less than 15% of all repairs (excluding gas repairs) to ensure that the workmanship of all contractors is continually monitored.