

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

Version Control					
Version	Date drafted	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date	Owner
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Introduction and Aims

This policy details Westmoreland Supported Housing Limited (WSHL) Repairs and Maintenance service and both the standards and delivery that can be expected by all Service Providers and their clients.

Effective maintenance is a critically important and high demand service for Service Providers and their customers. It is vital that a cost-effective service is delivered which meets the diverse needs of our Service Providers and their customers.

Through this policy, the aim is to:

- Ensure that all properties are maintained to a high standard
- Ensure that Service Providers and their clients work and live in homes which are safe and comfortable
- Ensure that high standards of customer care are achieved
- Ensure customers know what to expect from our service
- Provide users with a service which is appropriately tailored to their needs
- Provide a value for money service whilst meeting regulatory requirements
- Adhere to relevant statutory compliance obligations
- Provide an efficient responsive repairs service
- Ensure active asset management is implemented to maximise efficiencies

The policy complies with all relevant statutory provisions and will be updated to consider any future relevant legislation.

The policy complies with the Regulatory requirements set by The Regulator of Social Housing (RoSH) and more specifically the Home Standard which refers to Quality of Accommodation and Repairs and Maintenance.

Scope

This policy applies to the delivery of all Repairs and Maintenance obligations including Decent Homes.

Principles

Reporting Repairs

Customers and Service Providers can report a repair in a number of ways:

- By phone
- Via email

Emergency repairs can be reported by phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Repair Priorities

All repairs will be prioritised based on an assessment of the following criteria:

- Health and Safety risk to persons or property of the fault being reported
- The vulnerability of the customer/s reporting the fault
- Access to the property and/or location of the fault

‘Emergency’ definition - any repair that is required to sustain the immediate health, safety or security of the customer at risk or affects the structure of the property or those around it.

Details of which emergency repairs are covered are as follows:

- Loss of entire supply of electricity, and/or water and/or gas
- Loss of entire heating provision
- Loss of hot water facilities where customer’s health condition or vulnerability requires regular bathing and where there is no electric shower.
- All serious plumbing leaks where the property structure is in danger of damage
- Report of a gas escape
- Serious structural failures
- Security of property
- Broken glazing to windows
- Blocked toilet where it is the only toilet in the property
- Main drain to property is blocked
- Repairs to communal door entry systems where access is required
- Out of service lifts including stair lifts
- Customer locked out of home (Possible recharge)
- Mains smoke alarm and/or carbon monoxide (CO) alarm faulty

Please note this a general guide there may be variation in some lease and tenancy agreements.

Repair Response Times

Priority	Timescales (Days)
OOH	Same day (make safe)

P1	24 Hours
P2	7
P3	28
Planned/PPM	90

Table One

Rechargeable Repairs

Current and former customers will be recharged where emergency repairs are required because of negligence, deliberate or accidental damage. WSHL will take into account mitigating factors and individual circumstances before a final decision is reached.

If deemed to be misuse or vandalism the repair will be undertaken, and the cost recharged with a 5% administration charge capped at £20.00.

Repair Appointments

Emergency appointments will be attended to the same day to make safe as per Table One.

It is the intention where possible for all emergency works to be completed on attendance. In some circumstances where this is not possible, a follow up appointment will be raised and the customer will be informed of the timescales.

Day to day repair appointments will be offered by the contractor at the point of reporting the repair, this will be based upon the type of repair and the priority code it receives.

Decent Homes Compliance

A 100% stock condition survey was undertaken in 2020 to develop a clearer understanding of the stock that WSHL manage (Private Sector and Superior Landlord) with a view to developing a clearer picture of the investment requirements.

WSHL followed government guidance and applied the following definition of decency: -

- a) It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- b) It is in a reasonable state of repair
- c) It has reasonably modern facilities and services
- d) It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

WSHL dwellings which fail to meet this criterion are those which lack three or more of the following and will be classed as non-decent:

- A reasonably modern kitchen (15 years old or less).
- A kitchen with adequate space and layout.
- A reasonably modern bathroom (30 years old or less).
- An appropriately located bathroom and WC.
- Adequate insulation against external noise (where external noise is a problem).
- An adequate size and layout of common areas for blocks of flats.

Investment plans will be drawn up to ensure that this decency criterion will be maintained through the delivery of sustainable planned investment programmes.

Ongoing Stock Condition Surveys

A future strategy of undertaking a representative 20% SCS per annum internally over a 5-year period on a rolling basis will be implemented. This will ensure that data is refreshed and tested on a regular basis in line with current good practice and sector guidance. Any new leased stock would be subject to a SCS as part of the pre-lease appraisal process.

The scope of the survey encompasses all internal and external areas of each building and the resolution of any immediate Health and Safety concerns (HSRR Category 1) through the day-to-day emergency repair delivery model.

Each of the properties will be visited during this period by a qualified surveyor competent in the collection of building metrics and building surveying. Age and condition data will be collected on the following components:-

Survey Component Data

Kitchens	Chimney Stack	Rainwater Goods
Stand Alone W/C	Internal Decoration	Hard Standing
Bathroom En-suite	External Decoration	Flooring
Gas Boiler/Heating	Gutters	Fire Alarm Systems
Electrical (Hard Wire)	Windows	Fencing/Boundaries
Electrical Fixings	Ext/Int Gen Joinery	Roofing

Void/Empty Homes

The void process will be managed by the Housing Management Team, as will liaison with the Service Providers and Commissioners to ensure that properties are available in a timely manner to meet the clients who have been assigned those properties. Weekly management meetings will be held with the principal contractor to ensure void loss is minimised. Where demand is high these void properties will be prioritised to meet this heightened desirability.

Internal Communal Areas

Monthly inspections of internal communal areas are undertaken to establish any Housing and/or Property related issues. Any repair works or cyclical maintenance issues identified will be actioned by the housing team.

Customer Repair Responsibilities

Customers are responsible for reporting any defects in their home as soon as they become apparent. However, there are some types of repairs that WSHL would not undertake and would therefore be the responsibility of the customer or Service Provider for example:

- Repairs to unauthorised alterations carried out by a customer or Service Provider.
- Changing easily accessible light bulbs
- Gritting
- Cleaning or gardening outside of the agreed specification.

Customer General Responsibilities – Access

Customers have an obligation as per their tenancy agreement to ensure their home is kept to an acceptable standard and allow access to inspect and/or carry out any works. WSHL through their contractors will confirm with the customer the appointment for the repair work. The customer and Service Provider must provide access at the requested time and date.

Compliance activity remains a priority and we will operate a robust access procedure for undertaking statutory compliance checks such as fire safety, gas and electrical servicing activities; legal enforcement action will be taken if necessary to undertake these activities.

WSHL will not tolerate a member of staff or a contractor being threatened or intimidated when visiting or working in a customer's home. If this happens, the visit/work will be stopped and they will leave the property. The incident will be reported to the appropriate teams and tenancy enforcement action will be taken where necessary.

Customer Alterations / Permission Requests

WSHL will take a reasonable approach when considering a permissions request. If the permissions request is likely to cause a financial impact to WSHL then this request will generally be refused. If a permissions request is not compliant with health and safety law / regulations, then the request will always be refused.

Customer Feedback

WSHL will provide a range of opportunities for customers to provide feedback on the Repairs and Maintenance service and will look to use this information to improve this service wherever possible.

Health and Safety

As a commitment to Health and Safety WSHL has several maintenance policies and procedures to assist in the management of works being carried out whilst in or around our customer's homes and Service Providers places of work to ensure safety.

Achieving Value for Money

Operating an effective and efficient repairs service that delivers high levels of customer satisfaction whilst providing value for money (VFM), is a key strategic objective for WSHL.