



## **REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE POLICY**

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The repair and maintenance of their home and surrounding areas is one of the most important factors likely to influence tenant satisfaction. It is a service which all tenants will use and a comprehensive and efficient system is essential to ensure effective asset management of Linstone properties. As landlord Linstone have also to consider appropriate housing and safety legislation requirements.

### **2.0 DEFINITION OF REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE**

#### **2.1 REACTIVE OR RESPONSE REPAIRS**

Repairs which occur in a random fashion and cannot be planned or included in a programme of work.

These are usually single, one-off jobs to an individual dwelling and will be categorised as either: -

EMERGENCY, URGENT, ROUTINE or RIGHT TO REPAIR

## 2.2 PLANNED MAINTENANCE

### 2.2.1 CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE

This describes pre-programmed work carried out on a regular/periodic basis to:

- a) prevent premature breakdown of a component/installation

or

- b) ensure proper functioning of a component/installation e.g. gutter cleaning, external painting, central heating servicing, lift maintenance.

### 2.2.2 PROGRAMMED MAINTENANCE

This generally deals with the failure/breakdown of major components when repair would be ineffective and uneconomic e.g. replacement of roofs, windows, rewiring etc., but also includes works of upgrading and improvement planned to respond to rising needs and aspirations of tenants.

This work will normally be done to groups of properties through specific contracts or modernisation programmes.

## 3.0 AIMS OF THE POLICY

To provide a consistently high quality repairs and maintenance service which will ensure our properties are maintained to a high standard in accordance with all appropriate legislation and safety requirements.

To maximise the lettable life of our housing stock within the constraints of the financial resources available for this function.

To fulfil our statutory duties and comply with the law relating to repairs and maintenance services.

To comply with Communities Scotland Performance Standards for Social Landlords.

To minimise the proportion of expenditure on Reactive Repairs whilst maximising that spent on Planned Maintenance.

To keep the houses and surrounding environment in good and safe repair.

To ensure compliance with health and safety legislation and appropriate codes of practice.

To ensure prompt and effective response to repair requests within clearly defined priorities and timescales.

To minimise rent loss through the speedy repair of void properties.

To work towards the creation of an appointment system for reactive repairs to ensure they are carried out at a time which suits the tenant whenever possible.

To ensure that work is carried out in accordance with our CODE OF CONDUCT FOR CONTRACTORS (APPENDIX 1).

To work in Partnership with our various Contractors to provide an effective Repairs and Maintenance Service.

To ensure value for money whilst achieving the above.

#### **4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES**

##### **4.1 LANDLORD**

###### **4.1.1 STRUCTURE & EXTERIOR**

The Association will (in conjunction with owners if appropriate) keep in repair the structure and exterior of the house including: -

- (I) drains, gutters and external pipes (this does not include cleaning blockages by tenants' negligence)
- (II) the roof
- (III) outside walls; outside doors; windowsills; window catches; sash cords and window frames, including external painting and decoration
- (IV) external and common closes, hallways, landings and stairs.
- (V) internal walls, floors and ceilings, fire check doors, door frames and internal staircases and landings (excluding painting and decoration)
- (VI) chimneys, chimney stacks and flues (excluding sweeping)
- (VII) lifts, pathways, steps or other means of access
- (VIII) plasterwork
- (IX) integral garages and stores

- (X) estate boundary walls and fences (excludes divisional walls/fences and individual garden boundary walls/fences unless they are also estate boundaries).
- (XI) making good acts of vandalism/criminal activity providing the tenant notifies the Police within 24 hours of the event occurring.

#### 4.1.2 INSTALLATIONS

The Association will keep in repair and proper working order any installations it has provided for space heating, water heating, ventilation, sanitation and for the supply of water, gas and electricity, including: -

- (I) basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems, waste pipes and showers.
- (II) electrical wiring, fireplaces, fitted fires and central heating installations (provided or adopted by the Association), door entry systems, extractor fans (provided by the Association), laundry equipment (provided by the Association), white goods (provided by the Association).  
Communal aerial systems which become obsolete will be repaired while it is economical to do so. When it is no longer cost effective to repair, tenants and owners will be required to provide their own individual aerial.

#### 4.1.3 ACCESS

The Association will give as much notice as possible but at least 3 working days notice of access to tenants when it requires to carry out routine maintenance. In the case of an emergency, the tenant's co-operation will be expected for immediate access (in extreme cases this may have to be without the tenant's permission).

#### 4.1.4 INSURANCE

The Association will maintain appropriate building insurance. It is not responsible for arranging contents insurance cover for you although details are available about the SFHA Diamond Contents Insurance Scheme.

#### 4.1.5 COMMON AREAS

The Association will (in conjunction with other owners where appropriate) take reasonable care to keep common parts in repair and fit for use by residents and visitors to the property.

## 4.2 TENANT

### 4.2.1 MISCELLANEOUS REPAIRS

The Tenant is responsible (except in certain circumstances at the Association's discretion) for: -

- damage to glass (caused by negligence)
- damage to sinks or sanitaryware; choked sinks or sanitaryware (caused by negligence)
- renewal of plugs or chains
- replacing lost or broken keys and the costs incurred through forcing entry as a result of lost keys
- divisional fencing/walls
- individual garden boundary fencing/walls (unless they are also estate boundaries)
- decoration
- door bells/door name plates
- driveways (except where it forms the pedestrian access to house)
- electric plugs and fuses/light bulbs
- fireplace tiles/floor tiles
- most internal joinery
- pulleys and ropes
- smoke detector batteries

### 4.2.2 NOTICE OF REPAIRS

The Tenant shall report promptly to the Association any defect or disrepair for which the Association is responsible.

### 4.2.3 INTERIOR

The Tenant shall keep: -

- (I) the interior of the house in good and clean condition and in proper decorative order.
- (II) the house properly heated and ventilated.
- (III) the house secure and lockfast at all times.

### 4.2.4 NEGLECT

The Tenant agrees to repair or replace items damaged through neglect/carelessness/vandalism on the part of the Tenant, a member of the household or a visitor.

#### 4.2.5 GARDEN

Where the Tenant has exclusive use of garden grounds or another plot of ground, the Tenant shall keep it in a neat and tidy condition.

#### 4.2.6. COMMON AREAS

The Tenant will, in conjunction with other occupiers, sweep and clean the common parts on a weekly basis, or as required. Where there is a common backcourt the Tenant will be jointly responsible with other residents for its maintenance.

If the tenant fails to meet these obligations, the Association may carry out the works and recover the costs from the Tenant.

#### 4.2.7. REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

FULL DETAILS OF INDIVIDUAL ITEMS AND WHO IS RESPONSIBLE ARE CONTAINED IN ANNEX 2.

The Association reserves the right to change its policy in relation to those items which are not legally the responsibility of a landlord.

Any changes would be carried out in full consultation with tenants. Indeed it is our intention to continually review those items which are currently the responsibility of tenants e.g. divisional fencing; internal joinery; kitchen fittings/worktops etc. and, where possible, transfer responsibility to Linstone. In this way Linstone may better meet the aspirations and requirements of our tenants.

### **5.0 REPAIR RESPONSE TIMES**

#### 5.1 EMERGENCY

These are generally defined as repairs which are necessary: -

- (I) to prevent serious damage to the fabric of the building
- (II) to preserve the safety, health or security of the Tenant or his belonging

- e.g.
- choked w.c.
  - escape of water within a building
  - an electrical hazard or complete loss of electrical power/light
  - effect of fire where Tenant or property is at risk
  - immediate danger due to damage/deterioration of the building fabric
  - loss of certain special services e.g. lift breakdown/choked refuse chutes
  - certain glazing or security repairs

ATTENDANCE - within 2 hours to remove source of direct hazard  
COMPLETION TARGET - within 24 hours to restore services.

Some follow up work may be required under the URGENT or ROUTINE categories.

## 5.2 URGENT

Repairs which if left unattended would seriously affect the comfort or convenience of the occupier or the normal use of the property. It is for work which whilst it cannot be deemed an emergency, equally cannot wait for inclusion in the routine category.

- e.g.
- partial loss of power/lighting
  - choked sink, bath or wash hand basin (provided there is no overflow of water into the house)
  - no heating\* or hot water
  - most roof leaks
  - repairs to certain services e.g. safety equipment in multi-storeys

COMPLETION TARGET – 3 working days

\*heating systems usually 1 working day.

## 5.3 ROUTINE REPAIRS

The majority of other repairs (except non-time critical) fall into this category and are mainly those which do not seriously affect the occupiers enjoyment of their home.

- e.g.
- roughcast repairs
  - repairs to doors and windows (unless there is a security issue)
  - certain roof repairs – rhones/gutters/slates/ridges (where there is no water penetration)
  - glazing repairs (where there is no safety hazard)

COMPLETION TARGET

Electrical work - 5 working days  
All other trades - 10 working days

## 5.4 NON TIME CRITICAL WORK

This is for work which the Association has agreed with its contractor it is safe to leave to a mutually convenient time. This might for example include repairs which do not directly affect the Tenant's use of the home and which can be more cost effective if dealt with in quantity or in different weather conditions.

## 5.5 VOID HOUSE REPAIRS

This category includes all repairs required to make an empty house available for relet.

Minor items which do not fit in with the trades/work required can be carried out as routine repairs. The new Tenant must be advised of outstanding repairs and relevant timescales.

Electrical and Gas safety checks must be carried out on every occasion before a house is relet.

COMPLETION TARGET – 10 working days.

## 5.6 RIGHT TO REPAIR

In addition to the above Linstone continues to operate the Right to Repair Scheme (first introduced for secure public sector tenants in October 1994). This obliges the landlord to carry out small urgent repairs within a specified timescale.

It is recognised that some Right to Repair categories may over-ride some urgent repairs responses listed above.

The Right to Repair scheme gives the landlord specific timescales for specific jobs. These vary between 1 and 7 days. If the landlord's contractor fails to respond the Tenant is entitled to instruct another listed contractor to carry out the work and can claim a compensation payment from the landlord.

Qualifying repairs include: -

- |               |  |
|---------------|--|
| <u>1 DAY</u>  | - blocked or leaking drains/soil stacks/w.c.s/sinks/wash hand basins/baths/pipes/tanks/cisterns. |
|               | - complete loss of electrical power/gas supply.  |
|               | - unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting.   |
|               | - w.c. not flushing (if no alternative).   |
|               | - loss or partial loss of space/water heating (if no alternative).                               |
|               | - insecure external window/door/lock.  |
|               | - blocked flue to open fire/boiler.  |
| <u>3 DAYS</u> | - partial loss of electrical supply.   |
|               | - complete loss of water supply.   |
|               | - unsafe timber flooring/stair tread/handrail/banister.  |
| <u>7 DAYS</u> | - mechanical kitchen or bathroom fan not working.  |

Tenants will be informed when they report a repair if the repair falls into the Right to Repair category.

## 5.7 TECHNICAL PRE-INSPECTION

Some more complicated or unusual complaints will require the involvement of a Clerk of Works/Technical Representative. Local discretion will be used in deciding which repair reports require a formal technical assessment prior to any work being passed to the contractor. The goal will always be to balance the slight delay caused by incorporating a further stage in the repairs process with the advantage of ensuring that the work ordered is accurate in terms of description and measurement.

Widespread complaints involving the same house type or estate require further investigation through the programmed maintenance system.

COMPLETION TARGET – 2 DAYS

## 6.0 REPORTING REPAIRS

Tenants can report repairs to the Association by telephone, letter or by personal call at the office/surgeries. Repairs can also be reported electronically by E-mail or via the Web Site.

## 7.0 RECOVERABLE REPAIRS

This is where the Association carries out work and then recovers costs from the Tenant.

It will normally occur when: -

- (I) the repair is the result of damage/negligence/vandalism by the Tenant or a member of the household or a visitor.
- (II) the Tenant asks the Association to carry out works for which they are responsible.
- (III) an owner asks the Association to carry out work to their property.

In most cases an estimate will be supplied and a deposit required before work commences. Full payment will be expected on completion of the job.

## 8.0 MEDICAL ADAPTATIONS

The Association, as part of our Care in the Community policy, will carry out medical adaptations in liaison with the local Social Work Department – financial constraints allowing.

On occasion it may be decided by Committee that the cost of an adaptation is prohibitive and the medical need could better be met by transfer to a more suitable property. In these cases priority transfer under medical grounds can be offered.

## **9.0 ALTERATION/IMPROVEMENTS**

Tenants have the right to undertake alterations providing they receive written consent from the Association and any other necessary Planning/Building Approvals. Consent cannot be unreasonably withheld but conditions regarding standards and workmanship can be applied.

In certain circumstances compensation may be considered if a tenant leaves such approved improvements at the end of a tenancy. Payments will be made in line with published criteria and formula.

## **10.0 MONITORING THE REPAIRS SERVICE**

The Association will set targets for its contractors performance in each of the repair response categories. It will monitor and report on these on a regular basis. Targets will be set at: -

EMERGENCY	97%
URGENT	90%
ROUTINE/VOID	91%

A minimum of 10% of the completed repairs will be inspected by the Association's technical staff to ensure quality/standard of workmanship and value for money.

A random sample of completed repairs (10%) will be selected to participate in a tenants satisfaction survey regarding the repairs process.

Results of Repairs monitoring will be reported to Committee and/or Sub Committee on a regular basis.

## **11.0 CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS**

In an effort to minimise expenditure on reactive repairs the Association will maintain the following items on an Annual Maintenance Contract basis: -

- (I) gas fires and central heating system
- (II) solid fuel central heating
- (III) electrical and battery operated smoke detectors
- (IV) lifts and pumps
- (V) laundry equipment
- (VI) landscaped areas

## **12.0 EXTERNAL PAINTERWORK**

External components will be inspected and painted on a 5-year cycle.

Any necessary repairs will be carried out prior to the contract being started.

### **13.0 PLANNED MAINTENANCE INSPECTIONS**

Following the completion of a comprehensive Stock Condition Survey/Life Cycle Costing Exercise in Autumn 2002 a system will be devised which will allow for components to be in one fifth of the Association's stock to be inspected annually (5 year cycle).

Results will assist in the preparation of future Programmed Maintenance Works.

### **14.0 TENDERING/PROCUREMENT**

#### **14.1 REQUIREMENT TO TENDER**

Within the limits and as detailed in the Financial Regulations adopted by Linstone Housing Association Competitive Tender/Quotations must be invited for the following categories of work:

- ◆ Building and/or Repair Work
- ◆ Consultants Fees
- ◆ All other suppliers and services

#### **14.2 EXCEPTION**

Exceptions in the case of

- ◆ Work which can only be carried out by a Statutory Authority
- ◆ Maintenance of Proprietary Equipment which can only be undertaken by one Contractor
- ◆ Where limitation of competition exists because of specialist goods/services
- ◆ Cognisance of new procurement initiatives encouraged by Communities Scotland, Scottish Executive etc.

will only be made on written approval of the Director.

#### **14.3 TENDERING PROCEDURES**

Tendering procedures shall generally follow the Code of Procedure for Single Stage Selective Tendering 1989 together with any directives and guidance issued by Communities Scotland. Tendering procedures shall conform to requirement of the European Community as appropriate.

#### 14.4 TENDER LISTS

Invitation to tender will only be sought from Contractors/Suppliers previously vetted for:

- financial capacity
- technical competence

and who are contained on the approved list maintained and updated by the Association or as listed by Constructionline.

#### 14.5 OPENING TENDERS/ACCEPTING TENDERS

Tenders shall be opened, checked and accepted in accordance with the Financial Regulations adopted by Linstone Housing Association.