



## **Responsive Repairs Policy**

<b>Policy Name:</b>	<b>Responsive Repairs Policy</b>
<b>Status:</b>	Final - Approved
<b>Approved by:</b>	Common Board
<b>Drafted by:</b>	Melanie White – Business Manager
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<b>Next Review Date:</b>	May 2019

## KEY OBJECTIVES:

- Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (the Group) is committed to the provision of an excellent Repairs and Maintenance service to ensure the satisfaction of its tenants, to protect the value of its housing stock and achieve value for money
- To ensure colleagues are familiar with the objectives of the Group with regard to Repairs and Maintenance
- To meet our Repairs and Maintenance targets with a 'Right First Time'<sup>1</sup> approach
- To ensure that our service to all customers reflects, Group tenancy agreements, leases, legal requirements, best practice and regulatory guidance under the HCA's Regulatory Framework 2015 requirements.
- To work collaboratively with all key partners to ensure that we achieve these objectives
- To produce service standards in consultation with our tenant involvement mechanisms
- To establish the principles for performance standards and performance management
- To explain tenants responsibilities and identify where a recharge approach may be appropriate
- To identify situations where vulnerable tenants may require repairs support

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

All responsive repair works will be carried out by the Group in line with this policy and will be undertaken by the Group's direct labour organisation, Wythenshawe Works.

Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (the Group) will provide a quick, efficient and cost effective responsive and planned repair service in order to provide tenants with homes that are safe and well maintained in sustainable neighbourhoods.

A separate policy is in place to cover repairs carried out on empty homes, refer to the Group's Voids Policy.

The Group will undertake an annual zero based budget process for repairs and seek to make the most efficient use of this budget. The costs of the repairs service, and the cost of the provision of the preventative service, will be contained within the budget set. The Group will drive performance, improvements, cost savings and enhanced service offerings to achieve Value for Money.

The Group will take a strategic approach to ensure that repairs on our stock relate to current maintenance needs, deliver a right first time approach, enhance sustainability, deliver value for money and are directly influenced by our tenant's feedback and priorities. This will be underpinned by our Asset Management Plan.

The Group will annually monitor, track and review demand profiles of its housing stock for maintenance and plan resources appropriately to ensure homes are maintained and we make best use of those resources available. This data will also ensure our programmed investment work minimises component failure. A formal annual review and GLT report will be undertaken each summer ahead of the following years budgeting process.

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<sup>1</sup> As defined by 'Housemark' benchmarking guidance

This policy will also provide information to Tenants and Leaseholders about the repairing responsibilities of the Group and the responsibility of the Tenants and Leaseholders. It outlines the policy for repairs and how repairs are categorised dependant on urgency and size of work.

## **2.0 REPAIR CATEGORIES**

There are two main categories of repair: Responsive Repairs, made up of Emergency Repairs and Appointed Repairs and Planned Repairs, made up of Six Week Repairs and Programmed Repairs.

### **2.1 RESPONSIVE REPAIRS**

All responsive repairs will be completed by appointment at a time and date agreed with the Tenant.

#### **2.1.1 EMERGENCY REPAIRS**

Emergency repairs are carried out when there is a potential danger to health or risk to the safety of the occupants or third party or a danger of serious damage to the building. Priority will be given to those repairs that arise from acts of harassment or anti-social behaviour.

Emergency repairs will be attended to and completed within 24 hours. The tenant will be given a 2 hour appointment slot to suit them at the time of reporting the repair.

In some instances it may only be practical to carry out a temporary repair to make the situation safe and secure. Once this has been done, arrangements will be made to complete at a second appointment, at a time and date agreed with the tenant.

The following are examples of emergency repairs (this is not an exhaustive list);

- |                            |   |
|----------------------------|---|
| Water and Drainage Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Burst pipes, cylinders or tanks where there is an uncontrollable flow of water that the tenant cannot contain</li><li>• No cold water – if there isn't a general problem in the neighbourhood</li><li>• Where effluent is overflowing into the property or garden</li></ul>   |
| W.C.                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Blocked W.C. – where there is only one in the property (Tenants may have to pay for this repair)</li></ul>  |
| Electrics                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Complete power failure (if nearby homes are also affected, contact the electric company instead of the Group)</li><li>• Failure of communal lighting</li><li>• Faults to bathroom, kitchen or staircase lighting</li><li>• Smoke alarm that cannot be silenced, where no fire emergency exists</li><li>• Communal TV aerial failure in schemes for vulnerable tenants</li></ul> |

Domestic Heating Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any burst on a heating system which is likely to cause water damage</li> <li>• From 1<sup>st</sup> October to 31<sup>st</sup> March or were tenants are classed as vulnerable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No heating where you do not have a separate gas or electric fire</li> <li>▪ No hot water – when no other source in the property e.g. Immersion heater or electric shower</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Property Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lock or broken window lock – if it makes the property insecure (Tenants may have to pay for this repair)</li> <li>• Lost keys – if it makes the property insecure. Tenants may have to pay for this repair</li> </ul>
Lifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any faulty lift</li> </ul>
Gas Leak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gas smell leaks should directly be reported to National Grid Gas on 0800 111 999, in line with the Gas Safety Management Policy</li> </ul>

For the purposes of this policy the definition of a vulnerable household, when determining the eligibility of a heating related emergency, is deemed to be where a member falls into any of the following categories:

- Older person
- Child under 3 years old
- Person with a disability

Discretion, where appropriate will be applied by a manager of the relevant section.

The Group provides emergency repairs with local housing partners, Southway, City South and Manchester Working outside of office opening hours, during evenings, weekends and bank holidays, which can be accessed via the contact centre.

The Group will aim to respond within 3 hours under the out of hours service to make safe the incident and repair where practical to do so.

### **2.1.2 APPOINTED REPAIRS**

Appointed Repairs are carried out when situations don't pose a health hazard but cause an inconvenience, discomfort or nuisance to the occupants or third party and are likely to lead to further deterioration of the building if the problem persists.

The following are examples of responsive repairs which will be completed by appointment (this is not an exhaustive list).

Any leak, which has been controlled by the tenant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Running overflow</li> <li>• Dripping tap</li> <li>• Leak on a wastepipe</li> <li>• Any appliance which leaks only when used</li> </ul>
W.C.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-flushing W.C. that can be flushed in another way</li> <li>• Renewal of W.C. pan where there is only one in the property</li> <li>• Noisy pipes</li> </ul>

Miscellaneous

- Defective entry phone system
- Loose or detached banister or handrail
- Rotten or defective flooring or stair treads
- Light switches not working (where not in kitchen)
- General wear and tear to kitchen units

## **2.2 SIX WEEK PRIORITY REPAIRS**

Six Week repairs are repairs which are external or larger repairs which have a high value or are multiple trades; these repairs are carried out when situations do not pose a risk to the health, safety and security of the occupants or third party and/or specific/specialist materials may be required.

The following are examples of batched repairs; this is not an exhaustive list.

- Roof and gutter repairs
- Footpath repairs (except where there is an immediate hazard)
- Internal doors
- Plastering
- Pointing and brickwork
- Timber infestation / damp and rot

## **2.3 PROGRAMMED REPAIRS**

Programmed repair works are repairs which have been identified as common to a number of properties in a geographical area of a non-urgent nature and are able to be delivered collectively as part of an investment activity scheme to deliver value for money. An example would be wholesale replacement of failed double glazed units. The Group would take a 'batching' programmed approach to such requests. Tenants will be kept fully informed of the programme, including extent of works and timescales for delivery.

## **3.0 REPORTING REPAIRS**

Repairs can be reported in accordance with our customer access strategy and in the following key ways:

- By telephone - Customer Services Officers (CSOs) are available daily Monday to Friday to answer all enquiries in line with customer access strategy and published opening times
- Out of Hours Monday to Friday, weekends and Bank Holidays, the same number can be used to access the out of hours emergency repair line
- In person – at one of our reception offices open daily Monday to Friday in line with published opening times and access strategy
- Internet – [www.wchg.org.uk](http://www.wchg.org.uk), using our online service tenants can also view their repair history and rent statements

The Group will provide appropriate interpretation and translation services when required. The Group will also ensure appropriate technology solutions are in place to support customers and officers in the diagnosis of repairs and efficiency in deploying operatives effectively.

Upon receipt of a repair request, a member of the Contact Centre will assess the repair under the following criteria:

- Urgency- the first point of contact will determine the urgency of the repair
- Responsibility - certain repairs are the responsibility of the Group. For example if the repair is deemed to be fair wear and tear the Group will be responsible. If however the repair is due to wilful damage, the Group may make a charge. Some repairs are the responsibility of the tenant and are defined in the tenancy agreement. These are further clarified in section 4.0 and The Group's Rechargeable Repair Policy.
- Where a tenant has applied to buy their home, only emergency, wind and water tight and make safe repairs will be carried out.

### **3.1 APPOINTMENTS**

All Responsive repairs are appointable at the time of reporting the repair. Appointments for Planned repair categories will be made at a later date. A team member will contact the tenant to arrange a convenient start date.

Monday – Friday appointments are offered between the hours of 8:00am and 6:00pm, at a time agreed with the tenant.

Saturday appointments are between 8:00am and 3:00pm, (last appointment 2:00pm start).

For tenants who are unavailable within the core times, the Group will endeavour to accommodate their needs with a suitable alternative appointment time.

### **3.2 REPAIR CONFIRMATION**

Following an assessment of the repair status, the following will apply:

- A work order will be raised the same day and a description of the repair will be given. Upon request a copy of the repair order can be sent to the tenant in writing or by text to suit the tenant.
- The work priority assigned to the order including the date of the appointment or the deadline date for completion will be communicated to the tenant.
- If the nature of the repair requires a more detailed inspection, a convenient appointment will be made for a surveyor to attend to inspect the items of work required and agree what work will be completed, with the appropriate time scale.
- Text reminders are in place for appointable repairs to support tenants as a reminder and reduce no access costs.
- Satisfaction data will be collated after each repair. The tenant will be asked whether they are satisfied with the repair via the Technician's PDA.
- This information will be utilised to develop the service and any dissatisfied responses will be post inspected by a Team Leader, to review the dissatisfied concerns and utilise as service development data.

## 4.0 RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibility for the maintenance of the Group's homes is shared between the tenant and the Group. Tenants are expected to keep the property in good decorative order and undertake the following minor repairs:

- Easing to internal doors to fit carpets
- Clearing blocked sinks, basins and shower wastes
- Replacing electric fuses, light bulbs, tap washers, sink and bath plugs (unless communal)
- Relighting boilers
- Filling plaster cracks and internal decoration
- Toilet seats, repairs and replacements
- Plumbing in washing machines and repairs to own equipment
- Repairing damage caused by themselves or their visitors
- Repair any fittings or appliances not provided by the Group
- TV aerials or satellite dishes (unless communal) and any damage to property or neighboring property caused by their installation
- Clothes posts and lines (unless communal)
- Curtain rails and battens
- Garden areas, including tenants own fencing

The Group have a legal responsibility for keeping the structure, exterior and services of the building and most of the fixtures and fittings in good order. These include:

- Drains, gutters and external pipes
- Roofs
- External brickwork and doors, window sills and frames
- Chimneys, chimney stacks and flues
- Pathways, steps and other forms of access
- Plastering
- Repairs to boundary walls or boundary fences
- Replacing keys and locks (tenants may be charged for this if replacement is a consequence of their actions)
- All services. This includes gas and water pipes and electrical wiring
- Communal entrances, halls and passageways, stairways and lifts
- Communal lighting and security systems

NB. For shared ownership leases, the repair responsibilities will be set out in the lease and will take precedent over the above.

## 5.0 INSPECTIONS

Inspections can be classified as either pre-inspections or post inspections.

Pre-inspections will be needed to accurately diagnose the problems and determine what work is required or to support a vulnerable Tenant who is seeking assistance on a defect.

It is The Group's intention to minimise the use of pre-inspections and maintain inspection levels at around 5% in line with best practise. Examples of where they are necessary include;

- Where the tenant is unable to fully explain the repair required and needs our assistance
- The responsibility for the repair lies with the tenant or it is unclear
- Where a work schedule is required to cover major or multiple repairs
- A previous repair has not solved the problem

Many pre-inspections by surveyors result in no further work at the property and are actually advisory visits on managing controls or condensation advice etc, these will be identified as a separate category of inspection visits and demand levels used to inform our programmes and product choices.

Post inspections will be carried out to collate 'quality' information regarding the repairs. We set an annual inspection target (between 5% and 12% of jobs completed) for post inspections which will prioritise certain areas identified within our service improvement plan fed from customers feedback and complaints monitoring. We will use the information gathered to improve the repairs process and ensure an acceptable level of quality is achieved. This is reviewed annually as part of the demand analysis work each summer.

## **6.0 CANCELLATIONS**

Repairs will only be cancelled when:

- The tenant requests it
- The work has been completed by someone else
- The work is to be completed on a planned programme of works
- Cases of no access – general appointed repairs only

## **7.0 NO ACCESS**

It is the responsibility of the tenant to provide access for Technicians to carry out repairs and for Surveyors to carry out inspections which have been ordered.

The Group will confirm with the customer the appointment for the repair or inspection either by text, in writing or verbally to the customer's choice.

If the repair is an emergency repair, or if insufficient time is available to advise the tenant in writing, we will verbally advise the tenant. If the tenant fails to provide access for the appointment a missed appointment card will be left, requesting the tenant contacts The Group to rearrange as soon as possible.

### **7.1 APPOINTED REPAIR - NO ACCESS**

In cases of no access for day to day appointed repairs, the tenant will have 24 hours to contact the Group and rebook the repair. If the tenant does not contact the group, Wythenshawe Works will make a minimum of two further attempts to gain access to complete the repair, by providing the tenant with a new appointment.

If the repair has not been completed following all attempts, a letter will be sent to the tenant informing them that the repair may be cancelled if they fail to contact Wythenshawe Works in the next two weeks. The letter will be retained on the Group's documents storage system.

## **7.2 SIX WEEK REPAIR - NO ACCESS**

Six Week repairs are repairs which are external or larger repairs which have a high value or are multiple trades. These work type defects, if allowed to persist, may result in disrepair of the property. Therefore six week repairs are not immediately cancelled in cases of no access.

Where the tenant does not give access at the time of the pre-arranged appointment, a missed appointment card will be left. Following this Wythenshawe Works will make a minimum of three attempts to re-arrange with the tenant, by telephone and a formal letter issued.

If all Wythenshawe Works attempts to gain access to complete works are unsuccessful, the incident is escalated to involve a Housing Officer for a Tenancy Audit to support the process.

## **7.3 SIX WEEK REPAIR – GAS SERVICING/ELECTRICAL PERIODIC INSPECTION**

In cases of no access for Gas Servicing or Electrical Periodic Inspection appointments – the appointment is cancelled but the job is left open and the Gas servicing/EPI procedure is activated, which could result in legal action.

## **8.0 RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS**

A separate policy exists for rechargeable repairs. A rechargeable repair is where deliberate damage or neglect by the tenant, their family or visiting friends is caused to a property belonging to the Group. The repair will be highlighted with the customer as rechargeable at the point of reporting or before completing the repair to discuss the recharge payment arrangement in advance of proceeding with the works.

## **9.0 SELF REPAIR SCHEME**

The Group's Self Repair Scheme enables tenants to carry out their own minor, non-urgent repairs and claim costs up to a set value back from the Group.

Tenants must submit a self repair request; qualifying repairs will meet criteria as set out in the Self Repair Procedure.

All works will be subject to a pre and post inspection by an appropriate member of staff. Qualifying repairs will be up to a value of £200, must be the responsibility of the Group and must not be the consequence of wilful damage, neglect, misuse or abuse.

## **10.0 HANDY PERSON**

The Group delivers a handyperson service to undertake DIY tasks for all its tenants and leaseholders.

This service is available in morning or afternoon slots Monday – Saturday and a suitable fixed pricing and menu of repairs will be provided for tenants.

Where a handyman request is not listed in the fixed prices and/or is of a technical gas/electric nature, a pre-inspection may be offered to determine whether the Group will undertake the request and/or advise of the cost.

Charges for all handyman jobs must be paid in advance of works being completed, with no exceptions.

## **11.0 IMPROVEMENTS AND ALTERATIONS**

Improvements may only be carried out to resident's homes with written permission from the Group before the work commences. A separate procedure is in place to support tenants through this process and ensure clarity on standards and responsibilities. An inspection will be undertaken to ensure works are to the required standard. A charge may be levied for any corrections the Group has to make for sub-standard work.

## **12.0 OTHER WORKS CATEGORIES**

### **12.1 CYCLICAL WORKS**

Cyclical works are carried out periodically to prolong the life of the building component and to avoid either expensive repairs or a complete breakdown. Cyclical programmes are in place to control and minimise responsive failure demand, for example cyclical painting.

#### **12.1.1 GAS SERVICING**

Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 require that landlords ensure that appliances and associated equipment to which their duty extends is checked for safety within 12 months of installation and every 12 months thereafter. The Group adopts a 10 month servicing programme.

Annual Gas Safety Checks are completed to this effect with an external audit function in place, full details of which can be found within the Gas Servicing Policy.

#### **12.1.2 ELECTRICAL PERIODIC INSPECTION**

The electrical fixed wiring system to every property will be inspected at least once every 5 years or on tenancy change to ensure the installation is safe, full details of which can be found within the Electrical Policy.

### **12.2 PROGRAMMED IMPROVEMENT WORKS**

Large scale improvements such as kitchens, roofs, bathrooms, hard standings and external painting will be undertaken on a programmed basis in accordance with the stock condition survey and Asset Management Strategy and Plan.

Any associated repairs may be deferred until the programme works are to be undertaken.

### **12.3 VOID PROPERTIES**

Repairs on void properties will be completed in line with the Void Policy, Voids Standard and Procedure.

Occasionally it may be practical to postpone some repairs until the new tenant has moved in. In these circumstances the repairs will be authorised by the relevant void manager and added to the post-tenancy repair diary.

### **12.4 ADAPTATIONS**

Adaptations are assessed in line with the Adaptations Policy and categorised in two ways. Minor adaptations are small items such as grab rails, lever taps and bathroom rails. Major adaptations are larger scale works such as level access showers, stair lifts or adapted kitchens.

### **13.0 ASBESTOS**

The Group will take all steps possible to identify asbestos and asbestos-containing materials. Any works undertaken to manage this risk from asbestos will be completed as set out in the Control of Asbestos Policy. Asbestos information known to the Group will be shared with operatives and contractors.

### **14.0 COMPLAINTS**

Tenants who are dissatisfied with the service will be encouraged to follow the complaints procedure. Complaints and claims for compensation will be dealt with through the complaints and compensation policy for the Group. Legal claims for disrepair will be dealt with outside the complaints policy by the surveying team.

### **15.0 LEASEHOLD, SHARED OWNERSHIP AND EXTRA CARE PROPERTIES**

The Group has a different level of repair responsibility for leasehold, shared ownership and extra care properties as follows:

Leasehold property – The Group will maintain and repair the structure, exterior and common parts of the building, including drains and external pipes.

Shared Ownership – The Group is not responsible for any repairs or maintenance, unless explicitly stated in the lease

Extra Care Properties – The Group will maintain and repair the structure, exterior and common parts of the building, including drains and external pipes. The Group is also responsible for the maintenance and repair of internal plumbing, wiring, alarm and other electronic systems.

## **16.0 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

The performance of Wythenshawe Works will be monitored and actively managed. The measure of performance will be reflected within the Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) and Management Performance Indicators (MPI's) and used to benchmark our repairs service in accordance with best practice. These will be reported regularly to the Executive team and Board. We will adopt best practise and benchmark our service regular with similar peer organisations across the sector to enhance cost and performance metrics.

The Group will also monitor and track users of the service to assist identifying service improvements or vulnerability issues. Contacting high service users and non-users will help to ensure our service is fit for purpose and tenants are maintaining their tenancy appropriately.

### **16.1 CUSTOMER SATISFACTION**

The Group will gather satisfaction data in a number of ways and report consistently which may include methods such as:

- On site data collection through mobile hand held technology
- Immediate phone back
- Postal survey
- Text messages
- Internet
- External verification (surveys)
- Bespoke surveys targeted at specific service areas
- Organisation wide periodic satisfaction surveys
- Language line and translation services

## **17.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY**

The Group has a responsibility to serve the needs and promote the interests of its entire staff and all it tenants/service users. The Group will provide equal service in accordance with the Equality Act. The Group works towards developing services, facilities and working practices, which are equally accessible to and appropriate for all its customers, irrespective of their gender, age, race, sexuality, transgender, disability, religion, marital status/civil partnerships or income.

A key element of the Equality standards involves carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment on all existing and, in particular, new policies to ensure they do not have an adverse impact on or have any that can be justified on a particular group. An Equality

Impact Assessment has been carried out to this policy and will be reviewed on a regular basis.

The Group will make consideration for all identified vulnerable groups when conducting this service.

At the discretion of the Group consideration will be given to all vulnerable groups, tailoring our service and customer needs. This will be dealt with case by case on an individual need.

We will provide information in languages other than English, in Braille, Large Print, Compact Disc and Audiotape. Our reception and interview room are fitted with a hearing loop system.

## **18.0 RELATED POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

- Responsive Repairs Procedure
- Gas Safety Policy and Procedure
- Void Policy, Procedure and Standards
- Equipment & Adaptations Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy and Working Documents
- Environmental Sustainability Policy
- Control of Asbestos Policy
- Value for Money Strategy
- Stock Condition Survey (2013)
- Customer Complaints, Comments and Compliments Policy
- Compensation Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour Procedure
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Electrical Periodic Inspection Policy
- Asset management Strategy
- Asset Management Plan

## **19.0 STATUTORY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK**

- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 & 1987
- Housing Act 1985, 1988, 1996, 1998 & 2004
- Localism Bill 2011
- Laying the Foundations: A housing strategy for England 2011
- The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Occupiers Liability Act 1957
- Common Hold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Construction Act 1996
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007
- Right to Repair Regulations 1994
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993
- Health and Safety Legislation
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) 1999
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- CRE code of practice on Racial Equality in Housing