



# RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY

<b>Written by:</b>	<b>Head of Housing &amp; Customer Services</b>	<b>Version:</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Management Committee</b>	<b>Date:</b>	<b>31.01.18</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>January 2023</b>	<b>Pages:</b>	<b>6</b>

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy describes the activities and responsibilities involved in delivering a responsive service to our rented properties.
- 1.2 Responsive repairs are defined in this policy as repairs, which are requested by the tenant to existing elements of their property.

## 2. Objectives

- 2.1 The overall aim of this policy is to contribute to the efficient and effective maintenance of the Association's housing stock.
- 2.2 The specific objectives are to:
  - Provide an efficient, prompt and cost effective responsive repairs service, which is easily understood;
  - Promote understanding of the Association's legal responsibilities and mutual obligations in relation to responsive repairs issues;
  - Achieve high standards in customer care;
  - Monitor the performance of the responsive repairs service to seek continuous improvement;
  - Provide a service which reflects the Association's commitment to equality of access to the repairs service for all tenants and, to take account of the particular needs of vulnerable groups.
- 2.3 The principles underpinning the Responsive Repairs Policy are:
  - That all tenants are involved in and consulted on the development of the service and its operational procedures;
  - That through supervision, monitoring and feedback from tenants, the service is continuously improved;
  - That communication with tenants is always appropriate, easily understood and easily accessible;
  - That the repairs service is supported by appropriate training for staff.

## 3. Response Times

- 3.1 Before work is issued to a contractor it is categorised into 4 specific categories which all have specific timescales in which the contractor must

respond. These are:

- Emergency – 6 hours
- Urgent – 1 day
- Non-Urgent – 3 days
- Routine – 20 days

3.2 In all cases except 'Emergency' the timescales for completion will commence the first working day following notification of the repair to the Association.

3.3 The response times listed in the table below may in certain circumstances be flexible, to enable the needs of any tenant who has special needs such as visual impairment, physical disability etc, to be catered for.

Type of Response	Timescale	Description
Emergency	0 – 6 hours	Works to make safe where there is a risk to the tenant or members of the public ie structural faults to roof or walls. Works to make property secure or prevent further damage ie broken window glass, burst pipes. Total loss of water or electric supply.
Urgent	1 day	Works not classed as an emergency but which would cause a high degree of inconvenience if not attended to within one day eg total loss of water or electric supply. Works required to avoid further damage if the repair was not carried out.
Non-Urgent	3 days	Works not classed as an emergency but which would cause a degree of inconvenience if not attended to within 3 days eg partial loss of water or electric supply. Works required to avoid further damage if the repair was not carried out.
Routine	20 days	Works which do not directly affect the tenant's use of the fittings and services with the property. Staff will balance inconvenience to the tenant/damage to property against the cost effectiveness of allowing a contractor additional time to undertake a repair, eg repairs requiring good weather, or the ordering of spare parts.

3.4 In all cases where replacement parts are not available a temporary repair should be carried out within the response time where possible. If this is not possible alternative arrangements will be made, including decanting the tenant to another property if this is deemed appropriate. Detail on the Extension to the Target Date can be found in the Responsive Repairs Procedure. Detail on decanting can be found in the Decant Policy.

3.5 When follow up work is likely to be necessary following an emergency/urgent works order being issued, another works order will be required for any subsequent work. This will ensure accurate completion of target timescales.

#### 4. Reporting Repairs

- 4.1 Repairs can be reported to the Association in a number of ways:
- In person
  - By phone
  - Letter
  - email ([repairs@ohal.org.uk](mailto:repairs@ohal.org.uk))
  - website ([www.ohal.org.uk](http://www.ohal.org.uk))
- 4.2 The person reporting the fault should have the following information:
- Tenant's name, address and telephone numbers
  - Details of the fault/repair required
  - Access details
- 4.3 Where information is incomplete or where a technical decision is required a Works Order will be raised requesting a member of staff from the Development & Properties Team attend and advise accordingly.

## **5. Emergency Out of Hours Service**

- 5.1 Orkney Islands Council (OIC) currently provide the Association with an emergency out of office hours service. The Association pays a charge for this service. On the next working day OIC Building Inspectors should advise the Association of the details of callouts via a telephone call. This will result in a Works Order being issued to the relevant contractor for the works. The contractor then bills the Association directly.
- 5.2 The OIC emergency number is clearly shown in the Tenant Handbook and on the Association's telephone answering machine, website and Facebook page.
- 5.3 Inappropriate use of the service will be recharged to the resident. Full details can be found in the Resident Payment & Debt Policy & Procedures.

## **6. Method of Contractor/Supplier Selection**

- 6.1 The contractor undertaking the work will be selected from either our list of Approved Maintenance Contractors or the Association's Tradesman Team, depending on the nature of the repair required and location.

## **7. Rechargeable Repairs**

- 7.1 Where a repair is deemed to be the responsibility of the tenant, they will be given the option of undertaking the repair themselves to an approved standard or the Association will undertake the repair and recharge them accordingly.
- 7.2 The Association will maintain a Schedule of Charges for common repair works which details the costs that the Association will charge the tenant for undertaking the works. The Schedule of Charges forms part of the detailed Resident Payment & Debt Procedures.

- 7.3 The Schedule of Charges will be reviewed annually by the Association's Leadership Team to ensure the costs are appropriate and cover the overall costs of undertaking the works.
- 7.4 Any repairs not covered in the Schedule of Charges will be charged at cost.

## **8. Purpose and Percentage of Inspections**

- 8.1 Development & Properties staff will carry out both Pre and Post Inspections/Checks of repairs in order to comply with good practice and to ensure that contractors are undertaking satisfactory work.
- 8.2 Pre-inspection visits will be undertaken to ascertain exactly:
- what works require to be undertaken; and
  - which trade/contractor is best suited to carry the work out. (Often where problems arise, with for example heating systems, Development & Properties staff are able to rectify the fault or alter the settings without the need to call out a contractor).
- 8.3 Follow up Post-inspection contact with the tenant will be undertaken to:
- establish the quality of work meets an acceptable standard; and
  - address any concern the tenant may have with the quality of the repair undertaken.
- 8.4 Development & Properties staff will undertake QL generated randomly selected repairs to inspect. Targets will be reviewed from time to time and the Head of Housing & Customer Services will have authority to vary this percentage should the need be identified. Targets agreed are as follows:
- Pre-inspections – 5%; and
  - Post-inspections – 5%.

## **9. Maintenance during Defect Liability Period**

- 9.1 First year following date of Practical Completion  
Repairs arising during the Defects Liability Period due to workmanship or failure of components are the responsibility of the main Contractor. Such defects require notification to the main contractor by the project architect. However, as lines of communication between the Association's lead consultant and contractor can be extended, the Association will normally suggest to the lead consultant at Practical Completion that the Association notifies the main contractor of repairs needed via a works order directly and a list of all the defects occurring during this period be issued to the lead consultant at the end of the Defects Period.
- 9.2 Occasionally repairs arise that have no direct effect on the tenant's comfort or use of the property, for example hairline cracking appearing in walls. This type of defect may be best left until the end of the Defects Liability Period when other similar defects can be attended to at the same time.

## **10. Right to Repair**

- 10.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 gives tenants the right to have small urgent repairs carried out within a specified timescale - see Attachment 1 for details.
- 10.2 If the tenant fails to allow access to the house for the repair to be carried out or inspected then the Right to Repair procedure will be cancelled and the tenant informed.
- 10.3 If there are exceptional circumstances which prevent the repair being carried out then the Association will advise the tenant of the suspension of the Right to Repair.
- 10.4 In the event that we, or our contractors, fail to carry out the repair within the set timescales the tenant may be entitled to compensation. See the Compensation & Other Payments Policy for further details.

## **11. Performance Monitoring**

- 11.1 To ensure that the responsive repairs service offers value for money and is continually improved:
- Development & Properties staff will monitor and address:
    - The performance of contractors in achieving targets;
    - The quality of the works carried out by the contractors by undertaking post inspections on a selection of repairs undertaken by different contractors;
    - The expenditure on the responsive repair budget.
  - Housing & Customer Service staff will:
    - Monitor the tenants satisfaction questionnaires;
    - Report quarterly to Performance & Resources Sub-Committee on performance against the Key Performance Indicators; and
    - Report annually to Management Committee on the repairs satisfaction elements required for the Annual Return of the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

## **12. Review Process**

- 12.1 This policy will be reviewed when required by change of circumstances, but at least every 5 years.

## Attachment 1

<b>Defect</b>	<b>Maximum period in working days from date immediately following the date of notification of qualifying repair or inspection.</b>
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler.	1
Blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans where there is no other toilet in the house.	1
Blocked sink, bath or drain.	1
Electric power:	
o Loss of electric power.	1
o Partial loss of electric power.	3
Insecure external window, door or lock.	1
Unsafe access path or step.	1
Significant leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks, cisterns.	1
Loss or partial loss of gas supply.	1
Loss or partial loss of space or water heating where no alternative heating is available.	1
Toilet not flushing where there is no other toilet in the house.	1
Unsafe power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting.	1
Water Supply:	
o Loss of water supply.	1
o Partial loss of water supply.	3
Loose or detached banister or hand rail.	3
Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads.	3
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working.	7