

Repair and Maintenance Policy

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1. Management Information

1.1 Policy Details

Approval Date	30/06/09
Version	2
Review Date	Every 2 years
Author	Head of Asset Management, Development and Procurement
Director	Executive Director Operations

1.2 Circulation

This Policy is located electronically on SLH's intranet and website and is available to key stakeholders on request.

2. Introduction

Repairs and Maintenance is one of the key service areas for our tenants (residents/customers) and one that South Liverpool Housing (SLH) commits a large proportion of its annual expenditure to.

SLH is committed to providing all tenants with a first class, accessible and efficient repairs service.

This policy is put in place to ensure that staff, contractors and tenants are informed as to:

- How the repairs and maintenance service will be delivered;
- Provide detailed information on what those services are;
- How to access them; and
- What to do if things go wrong.

3. Aims of Policy

SLH's key objectives of the Repairs and Maintenance policy are to:

- Provide high quality repair and maintenance services; include something about having clear, well publicised service standards so that customers know what level of service they can expect to receive
- Ensure compliance with all legal duties;
- Achieve high standards of customer care and satisfaction whilst achieving value for money;
- Provide a prompt, efficient and effective service in line with SLH's commitment to Continuous Improvement;
- Include something about access to the service to meet individual needs of customers . offer a wide range of ways for customers to access the service
- Manage resources taking into account efficiency, economy and effectiveness;
- Prioritise programmes to ensure those dwellings that are most in need are addressed first;
- Ensure that an appropriate balance between responsive maintenance and planned maintenance is maintained;
- Involve customers in decision making about all services, timing of investment and product choice;
- Maximise the life of the stock;
- Minimise rental, and other losses associated with tenancy changes;
- Support the Affordable Warmth Strategy and action plan;
- Support the Asbestos Policy and action plan;

- Maintain an effective procurement strategy for all aspects of repair and maintenance, including total supply chain integration;
- Implement the Respect for People agenda;
- Promote and support our own sustainability agenda;
- Promote a diverse workforce and local labour initiatives; and
- Promote and employ Green and Sustainable credentials in respect of product and material choice.

4. Policy Statement

South Liverpool Housing (SLH) will ensure that it will provide a high quality, efficient, effective value for money service that complies with good practice and legal duties as a landlord; working within the service standards set out within this policy and any related policy. The reactive repairs service is delivered by Property Services in the Customer Services Team and planned and gas servicing works by the Asset Management Team.

SLH will ensure that its housing stock is well maintained, is in lettable condition and provides good affordable homes. SLH is responsible for providing, repairing, maintaining and renewing the structure; services and fittings such as baths, sinks plumbing and heating systems.

Recharges

However if items need repairing or replacing because of damage or neglect caused by the tenant or any member of the household, or visitors to the property, , the tenant will be asked to carry out the repair to SLH standards or be recharged for the cost of repairs in line with SLH's Recharge policy[add hyper link].

Tenants are responsible for certain repairs that are specified in the Tenancy Agreement and any items not installed by SLH.

Repair restrictions where money is owed to SLH

No repairs with the exception of the minimum repairs under Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 i.e.

- The structure and exterior of the house including drains, gutters and external pipes;
- To repair and keep in working order the installations for the supply of water, gas and electricity and for sanitation including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences, but not other fixtures, fittings and appliances for making use of the supply of water, gas or electricity; and
- To repair and keep in working order the installations for space and water heating.

will be carried out under the following circumstances:

- Where the tenant is in arrears of rent equivalent to two months; and / or
- Where the tenant is in arrears of any other charges levied by SLH such as Service charges, rechargeable repairs or any other costs; and

Where there is no agreement or repayment plan in place that has been kept to for a minimum 6 month period.

We shall introduce the above at a suitable point in the arrears escalation process to allow automation of the process.

Any planned or cyclical works will be put on hold and will only be reinstated at SLH's discretion, The Asset Management Team is responsible for overseeing this process.

Gas Safety

If the Gas Servicing / safety check (CP12 certificate) is out of date, no reactive, planned or cyclical repairs will be carried out to a property until the gas safety check has been completed. If an emergency repair is requested this can be verbally ordered at the same time as booking an appointment for the gas safety check. However no works will be carried out until the gas engineer has first completed the safety check. If a gas safety check is required out of hours for an emergency repair, our gas servicing contractor will attend first.

Any other non emergency repairs will only be ordered following the completion of the gas safety check and the issue of a CP12 certificate. SLH's housing management system (Orchard) will be programmed to automatically suspend the ordering of any works until a completed CP12 has been issued and Orchard updated.

4.1 SLH Housing Obligations

SLH is responsible for keeping the structure and exterior; any installations provided for space heating, water heating, sanitation and the supply of water, gas and electricity of its homes in good repair.

SLH will also be responsible for the inspection and maintenance of any common areas of buildings and keep them in reasonable repair.

SLH is also responsible for decorating the exterior of our properties and will normally do this every seven years.

SLH is obliged by law to undertake every 12 months a gas safety inspection of any gas appliances within our properties and ensure that all flue ways are clear and functioning correctly.

4.2 Tenants and residents Obligations

It is the responsibility of the tenant to:

- Report any repairs / property defects immediately to SLH;
- Obtain written approval from SLH before altering the property, or

fixtures / fitting provided;

- Allow access to SLH employees, agents or contractors at all reasonable times, or in an emergency, to carry out repairs to the property or adjoining property;
- Maintain the interior of the property in good decorative order;
- Replace plug fuses, light bulbs, florescent tubes and starters . (except in common areas);
- Ensure any cooker, heater or other gas appliance they install is fitted by a qualified engineer and serviced/maintained in accordance with the manufacturers instructions;
- Carry out minor repairs e.g. replace sink plugs, tighten screws;
- Replace lost or broken keys;
- Maintain fixtures and fittings such as curtain rails, and any other that belongs to or has been installed by them;
- Clear blockages in waste pipes and toilets caused by a lack of care (e.g. fat, hair, nappies);
- Test any fire detector fitted monthly and replace batteries as necessary;
- Take all reasonable precautions to protect the property from damage by fire, frost or water;
- Not store quantities of inflammable materials or gases other than may be reasonably required for domestic use;
- Carry out repairs to improvements or alterations they have carried out, for which they were not initially granted approval to undertake by SLH;
- Maintain individual garden areas;
- Keep common parts neat and tidy and free from obstruction; and
- Leave the property and garden: free from rubbish and belongings, any damage made good by them, in a good decorative state and clean when they vacate it.

Where a tenant has fitted / had installed their own gas fire, SLH will undertake an annual safety check and make a visual inspection of a gas cooker if installed in order to comply with their statutory responsibility as a landlord. In the event of any appliance breaking down, failing the safety check or visual inspection the responsibility to repair / maintain remains with the tenant and the gas engineer will disconnect appliance from the gas supply.

Tenants will also be responsible for repairs that are required due to neglect or abuse by themselves, a member of their household or visitor in line with SLH's Recharge policy [add hyper link]:

4.3 Contacting South Liverpool Housing

The aim of SLH is to make the service accessible to all tenants. Tenants can ring our dedicated Freephone Repair Line, 0800 0731760, 24 hours, 365 day a year, where calls will be answered by trained staff.

Normal working hours for SLH contractors is 8am . 6pm Monday to

Friday and Saturday 8am to 1pm with an emergency service operating at all other times.

SLH also offers a full interpretation and translation service at all times and can provide a variety of information leaflets in multi-lingual format, large print, Braille and in audio taped format, upon request.

Whilst the dedicated Freephone Repair Line is the most efficient and effective way to report, or discuss a repair; the service can also be accessed via:

- Fax . 0151 285 5699
- e-mail . [http:/// repairs@slhgroup.co.uk](mailto:repairs@slhgroup.co.uk)
- Letter to SLH Head Office, Parklands, Speke
- At any SLH reception, during the times we are open
- Via any member of staff
- Website, via our interactive services: www.slhgroup.co.uk

4.4 Rechargeable Repairs

In some cases, SLH may carry out repairs for which the tenant or former tenant may be responsible for and therefore charged for in line with SLH's recharge policy [add hyper link].

4.5 Right to Repairs and Compensation for Improvements

Under certain circumstances, tenants have the right to claim compensation when SLH fails to carry out repairs or when they improve their homes. For further information please refer to the Right to Repair and Compensation for Improvement Policy [add hyper link].

4.6 Repairs by Appointment

SLH provide a repairs by appointment system for the following trades in 2 hour appointment slots:

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| • Carpentry | • Glazing |
| • Electrician | • Gas servicing |
| • Plumbing | • Heating |

This service is administered by the SLH Customer Service Centre

4.7 Inspection by Appointment

SLH provides an inspection by appointment system to enable those customers requesting an appointment with a SLH Surveyor to do so at their convenience. Appointments should be within 10 working days and SLH will normally pre-inspect for the following works:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| • Damp | • Bathroom replacements |
| • Roofing | • Heating |
| • Kitchen replacements | • Major repairs |
| | • Recharges |

This service is administered by the SLH Customer Service Centre

4.8 Complaints

SLH operates a comprehensive Complaints and Compensation Policy . For further information please refer to the Complaints and Compensation Policy [add hyper link].

4.9 Budgets and Operational Responsibilities

A budget will be prepared annually by the Head of Asset Management, Development and Procurement (HAMDP) for planned works, cyclical and gas servicing programmes, the Head of Customer Services (HCS) for day to day and voids. Supported by the Property Investment (PIM) and Property Services (PSM) Managers respectively.

Draft budgets are presented to the SLH Management Team for initial consideration before submission to the Board as part of the annual budget setting process. Overall responsibility for the budget rests with the Executive Director of Operations.

Work Steams	Operational Responsibility
Reactive repairs	HCS/PSM
Voids	HCS/PSM
Planned	HAMDP/PIM
Cyclical	HAMDP/PIM
Decent homes/HHSRS	HAMDP/PIM
Disabled Adaptations	HAMDP/PIM
Gas Servicing	HAMDP
Heating	HAMDP

4.10 Authorisation of Expenditure / Procurement of Services

Levels of authorisation and the procedure for the procurement of services are detailed within the SLH Financial Regulations and the Procedural Guide for Procurement [add hyper link].

4.11 Sustainability

SLH remain committed to promoting, delivering and maintaining sustainability in all we do, we will therefore:

- seek more effective and efficient processes and procedures so that waste is minimised and our properties and land enhance the local neighbourhood;

- encourage local employment throughout the partnership and supply chain, that is representative of the communities in which we work;
- ensure the selection of materials that support our green credentials are manufactured and procured ethically and that minimise their impact on the environment and maximise their whole life durability;
- support our affordable warmth and anti poverty strategies;
- ensure we specify products and materials that conform to the groups own design and performance standards.

4.12 Asbestos

The Control of Asbestos at Work Act 2002 (CAWR) places a specific duty on all owners of property to manage the risk from asbestos containing materials in their premises. This definition of property owners extends to RSLs.

This legislation does not currently apply to domestic stock; however it does apply to any common areas/parts for domestic stock, such as foyers, corridors, lifts, lift shafts, staircases, boiler houses, service cupboards, gardens, yards and outhouses of sheltered schemes and houses of multiple occupation.

SLH completed surveys to all domestic common areas and other relevant buildings prior to the main refurbishment works being carried out, allowing SLH to start to compile an asbestos register to comply with CAWR.

SLH has an Asbestos Policy [\[add hyper link\]](#) in place to ensure conformity with CAWR. This policy and the asbestos register have been made available to both staff and partner contractors.

4.13 Defects – New Build or Major Refurbishment

Tenants are able to report defects in the same way as a normal repair and the service standards applicable to defects are identical to those set out for reactive repairs.

Where the defect is minor i.e. minor redecoration, hairline plaster cracks, the tenant will be informed that such defects will be left until the 12 month final defect inspection is completed, at which time the defect will be completed.

4.14 Contractors Code of Conduct

SLH have in place a code of conduct [\[add hyper link\]](#) for all contractors. The code details South Liverpool Housing's expectations in respect of the conduct of operatives and levels of customer care expected from contractors.

4.15 Gaining Access

Tenants have an obligation under the tenancy agreement to allow access to SLH employees, agents or contractors at all reasonable times in order to allow a repair or maintenance operation to take place, or in an emergency, to carry out repairs to the property or adjoining property.

For further information regarding gaining access please refer to the Access Policy and procedure [add hyper link].

4.16 Void Repairs

Minimising the time taken to turnaround a void property is essential to reduce rent loss and help maintain a sustainable neighbourhood. In preparing a property to be re-let, SLH work to an established minimum void relet standard, developed and reviewed in consultation with customers (add hyper-link).

For further information, please refer to the Void Property Policy and Procedure [add hyper link].

4.17 Gas Servicing

This will be carried out in line with the statutory duty placed upon the Association and best practice. SLH has produced booklets detailing gas servicing and gas safety and these have been distributed to all tenants.

For further information on gas servicing, please see the Gas Maintenance policy [add hyper link].

4.18 Planned Investment / Decent Homes / Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS)

Investment programmes will be driven by SLH's stock condition data, individual detailed surveys of properties, funding availability and tenant priorities.

This approach provides the basis to allow programmes of work to be established to ensure all SLH properties meet or exceed the Government's Decent Homes Standard by 2010 and ensure tenant investment priorities are considered and influence future investment.

SLH has incorporated HHSRS into their latest stock condition survey and to be decent, homes should be free of category 1 hazards. Monitoring of the HHSRS is carried out during the update/surveys on planned and void works. SLH has set aside a budget to deal with any category 1 hazard which becomes identified.

Annually consultation on proposed investment programmes will take place through the Community Focus Groups and Neighbourhood Panel.

5. Relevant legislation

SLH recognises its duty to comply with current and future legislation and will operate this policy within the current

statutory framework.

SLH also recognises its moral obligations to comply with current good practice guidelines and codes of conduct.

Set out below is the current statutory framework within which SLH will apply this policy:

- Housing Acts 1985,1988,1996, 2004
- Landlord and Tenant Act 1985
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- The Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Occupiers liability Act 1957 & 1984
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- Supply of Goods and Services Act 1982
- Decent Homes Standard
- Data Protection Act
- Human Rights Act
- Control of Asbestos at Work Act 2002
- Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Party Wall Etc. Act 1996
- Home Energy Conservation Act 1995

In addition SLH will comply with its obligations and requirements under the following:

- Building Regulations
- Construction Design and Management Regulations
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- IEE Regulations (17th Edition) . BS7671:1992
- Fire Regulations
- Tenancy Agreements/Leases

6. Performance Indicators & Performance Monitoring

Performance regarding all aspects of the repair and maintenance service is reported monthly to the SLH Senior Management Team; performance is monitored by operational teams and reported to the Community Focus Group. Service performance and standards are publicised to the wider tenant base through the Bulletin is publicised to customers in Bulletin.

Headline key performance indicators are reported to the Operations Committee and SLH Board at each quarter end.

Some examples of key headline KPIs monitored and reported.

- Customer satisfaction;
- Number of repairs completed on first visit;

-
- Day to day response performance for Emergency, Routine and Urgent priority repairs
 - Number of appointments, pre and post inspections made and kept;
 - Void relet times;
 - Order variation levels for void and day to day repairs
 - Complaints received;
 - Homes non-decent / made decent;
 - Planned and cyclical programme delivery based on time, quality and cost targets set; and
 - Number of expired CP12s.

7. Associated Policies

This policy should be considered alongside the following policies;

- Void Property Policy
- Access to Carry Out Repairs Policy
- Right to Repair and Compensation for Improvement Policy
- Gas Maintenance Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Asbestos Policy
- Adaptations Policy
- Communal Areas Inspection Procedures
- Affordable Warmth Strategy
- Design and Performance Standards
- Repair and Maintenance Strategy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Complaints and Compensation Policy
- Financial Regulations
- Sustainability Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- The Audit Commission
- ODPM-Decent Home Standard
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System