

# Bridgewater Housing Association Ltd Policy

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committee on**

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## Repairs and Maintenance Policy

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Bridgewater Housing Association takes pride in being able to provide good quality housing. The Association is equally committed to ensuring its stock is well maintained and to putting in place comprehensive repairs and maintenance services to achieve this.

This policy serves to define the Association's broad aims in relation to its repairs and maintenance services. It sets out a range of general principles that will guide its actions in relation to requests for repairs from customers and in its implementation of an effective repairs service.

## 2. CONTEXT

The Repairs and Maintenance Policy is amongst the most critical working documents used in the delivery of the Association's housing service. It has been developed to take account of legislative, regulatory and good practice requirements, including the Scottish Social Housing Charter, the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and the Energy Efficiency Standards for Social Housing. The Association will ensure that its operational practices accord with these requirements

### Legislation

The legislative requirements include the need to comply with the range of health and safety duties imposed upon landlords; and various landlord responsibilities set out in the 2001 and 2010 Housing (Scotland) Acts. In addition various contractual terms are imposed through relevant tenancy, occupancy and management agreements. The Association shall ensure all its practices accord with these requirements and terms.

### Performance Standards

The Scottish Social Housing Charter came into effect in April 2012 and this sets the standards and outcomes that all social landlords should aim to achieve when delivering their housing activities. The Charter replaces the previously jointly, (between the SFHA and the Regulator) agreed "Performance Standards" and states in terms of maintenance landlords should:

#### 2: Communication

Social landlords manage their business so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

#### 4: Quality of Housing

Social Landlords manage their business so that tenants homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair.

#### 5: Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements

Social landlords manage their business so that tenant's homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.

#### 13: Value for Money

Social landlords manage all aspects of their business so that tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.

Social landlords are responsible for meeting the standards and outcomes set out in the Charter. The Scottish Housing Regulator is responsible for monitoring, assessing and reporting on how well social landlords, individually and collectively, achieve the outcomes. The Scottish Housing Regulator's approach to monitoring landlord's achievement of the outcomes and standards in the Charter will be based on the landlord's performance information and their own assessment of their performance. Therefore, for each year ending on 31 March landlords will be expected to:

- Measure and assess their performance in progressing towards or achieving the Charter outcomes and standards.
- Provide the Regulator with some key performance information on their achievement of the outcomes and standards
- Report their performance to their tenants and other service users who use their services.

Bridgewater Housing Association has carried out a consultation exercise on each element of the Charter and sought opinions from its customers about service outcomes and standard.

### **Business Planning**

This policy supports the strategic requirements of the Association's Business Plan; Framework of Governance and the Association's strategies policies and procedures including our Tenant Participation Policy and Strategy, Equalities Policy, Risk Management Strategy and Asset Management Strategy.

This policy is supported by comprehensive repairs and maintenance procedures that detail the processes involved in the effective delivery of the associated services. The Association will also ensure that all staff and Board Members receive appropriate training and support to meet the requirements of this policy and the related procedures.

### **3. AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY**

Key areas of responsibility in relation to the implementation of the Association's Repairs and Maintenance Policy are detailed below:

**The Board** – has responsibility for ensuring that this policy complies with regulatory and legislative requirements and meets the Association's Business Plan and Budget Objectives.

**The Chief Executive** – has responsibility for ensuring that this policy is applied to ensure compliance with regulatory and legislative requirements and meets the Association's Business Plan and budget objectives

**The Technical Services Manager** – has responsibility for operational delivery of the policy and for the management, supervision and training of the staff responsible. The Technical Services Manager also has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate technical support and advice is provided to the Board, Management Team and other relevant members of staff and for reporting performance information to the Board and Management Team on repairs and maintenance issues, including actions taken to achieve performance in line with service targets.

**The Finance Manager** – has responsibility for ensuring that appropriate financial support and advice is provided to the Board, Management Team and other relevant staff members.

The Association's Board delegates all responsibilities for operational delivery of the repairs and maintenance services to the Association's staff team. The roles and responsibilities of the individual team members involved are detailed in the Repairs and Maintenance Procedures

### **4. POLICY AIMS**

The specific objectives of the Repairs and Maintenance Policy are to achieve the following:

- Provide homes that offer a warm, comfortable and healthy living environment for occupants: and which remain in demand.
- To effectively maintain the Association's non-housing properties to sustain their value as assets and to ensure they remain fully functional.
- Provide an efficient and responsive reactive repairs service that is responsive to the needs of tenants and other service users and that gets repairs done right, on time, first time.

- Provide a repairs service to factored owners commensurate with Written Statements of Service and more broadly the requirements of the Property Factors Act
- To enable medical adaptations work to be carried out in order to meet the individual needs of tenants whenever possible and practicable, subject to the constraints of funding referred to in Section 9.
- Achieve value for money in procurement. In this regard, due consideration shall be given to the provisions of the Association's Procurement Policy and procedures.
- Minimise void repair periods
- Ensure effective systems are in place for monitoring and recording information about the condition of our assets. This information shall underpin the planning and maintenance and improvement work; and the financial planning process.
- Ensure effective systems are in place to monitor performance in relation to maintenance and repair activities and services. These shall underpin the framework for achieving desired levels of work quality and customer service satisfaction.
- Provide customers with regular performance information; and a range of opportunities to be involved in the development of the full range of maintenance and repairs activities and services and to encourage and facilitate this involvement. In this regard due consideration shall be given to the provisions of the Association's Tenant Participation Strategy.
- Enable the Board to exercise due control over maintenance activities through ensuring appropriate performance reporting systems are in place.

## 5. SERVICE AND STANDARDS

The reactive repairs service is delivered by the Association's Technical Services Team. Team members are tasked with a range of duties relating to the inspection of requested repairs work, the instruction; and inspection and monitoring of repair and servicing work; budget control and general administration of the service. A copy of the Association's Service Standards for the repairs service is attached to this policy at **Appendix I (SERVICE STANDARDS)**

The Association shall publicise information about the service in a number of ways. The tenant handbook and website in particular shall contain information indicating the division of landlord and tenant responsibility for instructing and paying for different types of repair work. Publications such as the Newsletter shall also be used to provide more general and practical information, including contact details and service performance statistics.

In common with all of its services, the Association endeavours to make the reactive repairs service fully accessible to all who require use of it; and, as far as possible, responsive to the individual needs of service users. Tenants may inform the Association that repair work is required via telephone, letter, email, texting, the website or in person at our office, according to their individual preference. The Association shall aim to implement a flexible approach to agreeing to requests for specific appointments to have repair work carried out. As a minimum standard the Association shall aim to arrange for appointments on specific days and offer first or last calls or an appointment within a specific two hour "window" for gas heating repairs and general maintenance repairs.

With all repair works the Association shall aim to ensure that good quality materials are used by repairs contractors and also that high standards of work are achieved. A robust inspection and monitoring system shall be in place for this purpose, a copy of the Association's Inspection Framework is attached to this policy at **Appendix II (INSPECTION FRAMEWORK)** Similarly the Association shall maintain effective systems for monitoring contractor performance and requesting feedback from service users on repair work carried out.

In addition the Association will sign up to the Chartered Institute of Housing's Repairs Charter and to its core commitments. **Appendix III (REPAIRS CHARTER)** provides details of these core commitments and how the Association aims to achieve them.

### **Completion Times**

The Association shall periodically review the completion timescales specified in relation to the following categories to ensure it is operating in line with its peer organisations, regulatory guidance and relevant good practice and customer feedback. We will consult with tenants on any proposed changes to timescales.

The Association shall categorise reported faults according to the level and nature of response required. The Association shall endeavour to apply a consistent approach to categorisation and ensure the staff team are appropriately trained to achieve this. It shall operate three categories, each with a different target completion timescale as follows:

### **Emergency Repairs**

Incidents which present circumstances that constitute a safety hazard or which make a property uninhabitable shall be categorised as Emergency. This will include, but not be restricted to incidences of fire and flood. Work to remedy interruption to mains services i.e. electricity, gas, water and Right to Repair items with a one day completion time shall be placed in this category, as will situations which will cause unreasonable and exceptional inconvenience to tenants.

Contractor will be instructed to attend within 4 hours of the repair being reported, make the property safe and secure and prevent serious loss or damage to the occupier's property. Any follow up work required will be allocated a completion category timescale that reflects the extent and nature of the work required.

The Association shall have in place arrangements to ensure requests for emergency repairs can be received and responded to 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### **Urgent Repairs**

Faults and incidences that require prompt attention but which do not arise as a result of emergency circumstances shall be categorised as Urgent. This will include but not be restricted to: broken toilet seat, faulty door handle, loose handrail, and repairs required to features of communal areas including doors and roofs.

Contractors shall be instructed to complete the required work within 3 full working days (commencing the day the repair was reported).

### **Routine**

All other items of non-urgent work shall be categorised as Routine. Contractors shall be instructed to complete the required repair within 5 full working days (commencing the day the repair was reported).

A copy of the target timescales for each individual repair type is attached to this policy at **Appendix IV (TARGET TIMESCALES)**. The Association reserves the right to amend the completion category and timescale for individual repair works to take account of unforeseen or other specific circumstances. These include, for example, a requirement to order parts and materials, very specialist works and additional works being identified when repairs are being carried out. Any amendment to the completion timescale will be clearly recorded in order to create an appropriate audit trail.

### **Right to Repair (Qualifying Repairs)**

The Association shall adhere to the requirements of the Right to Repair scheme defined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. It shall have in place and publicise systems and methods of working that ensure full compliance with this. Staff members shall be fully trained in implementing these. They will also be advised of the relevant statutory regulations governing the provisions of the scheme.

The Association acknowledges the particular requirements to advise tenants in writing annually of the provisions of the scheme and shall use its newsletter as the principal means of achieving this. Notwithstanding this, the Association shall make information about the scheme freely

available to all tenants; and advise on an individual basis, whenever the provisions of the scheme apply. The Association's Repairs Receipt will also identify whether the repair falls within the scope of the provisions. The Association shall maintain records which enable it to monitor and demonstrate compliance with the Right to Repair Scheme.

Where the timescale for a Qualifying Repair is shorter than that for an Urgent or Routine repair, the timescale for the Qualifying Repair will be applied.

### **Rechargeable Repair Work**

In the main the Association shall carry out repair work for which it is responsible in accordance with tenancy or other agreements. Charges shall be levied where a repair becomes necessary as a result of clearly wilful, negligent or accidental actions of the tenant/s household or visitors, (rather than through fair wear and tear). A copy of the repair responsibilities of the Association and that of its tenants is attached to this policy at **Appendix V (REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES)**. Further information on the process for charging is provided in the Association's Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

### **Void Properties**

The Association aims to let empty properties as quickly as possible in order to minimise loss of income. In order to achieve this it shall adopt a systematic approach to undertaking inspections and instructing necessary repair work; to monitor progress towards completion; and to passing properties fit for let. The Association shall have in place a Void Lettable standard. This will define, as far as practically possible, the nature and extent of repair work that will be carried out prior to a property being deemed as fit for let. This standard will be periodically reviewed in consultation with tenants to ensure it is fit for purpose and meets general expectations and best practice. See **Appendix VI (VOID RE-LET STANDARD)**.

Repair work to void properties shall be categorised with completion timescales on the following basis:

**Void 1 Minor Works (estimated value <=£500) – completion within 3 to 5 working days**

**Void 2 Standard Works (estimated value >£500) – completion within 6 to 10 working days**

By exception, where work of a much more extensive nature is required, the completion period can be extended. Any property requiring repair work of a minor nature can be passed for let on the basis that the repair work shall be completed as soon as possible post tenancy commencement.

Where only a gas and/or electrical check is required to re-let the property, the completion time will be reduced to the minimum necessary to re-let the property.

Notwithstanding the nature or extent of any repair work required, it is the Association's policy to:

- Complete a gas safety check on any property that has a gas heating system or other gas appliance; and have this carried out before the new tenant moves in.
- Complete an electrical safety check in all void properties,
- Ensure that a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) is provided within the property, if required.

## **6. SERVICE PROVIDERS RESPONSIBILITIES**

The overall approach taken by Service Providers must to be consistent with the Aims of this policy set out in Section 4 and the Service Standards set out in Section 5. This requires Service Providers to complete work within contracted timescales and a commitment to achieving continuous improvement. Procurement of services will, where appropriate, take account of a Service Providers ability and commitment to deliver services in a way that is consistent with this policy.

All operatives carrying out repairs or maintenance works to Bridgewater owned or managed properties shall:

- Carry identification and present it to the occupier on arrival and whenever requested to do so
- Wear uniforms provided by the Service Provider
- Ensure the premises is secure at all times
- Minimise disruption to the premises and clear up fully at the end of the work (or before leaving the premises overnight)
- Make good any damage caused in the course of the works
- Remove and dispose of all waste materials appropriately
- Ensure that access arrangements made between the tenant/other service users are kept
- Comply with all relevant Health and Safety legislation to avoid danger to tenants, factored owners, other service users, visitors and members of the public
- Always treat our customers with courtesy and respect

## 7. SERVICING OF GAS APPLIANCES AND INSTALLATIONS

### Gas Servicing and Maintenance

The Association recognises the critical importance of ensuring gas heating and hot water systems in its properties are in good safe working order. It shall meet all statutory duties in relation to gas safety management in terms of the Gas Safety Regulations 1998 and associated health and safety legislation. The Association will appoint Gas Safe registered contractor/s to carry out the servicing, installation and repair work to gas appliances and associated gas 'work' as defined by the Regulations. Only Gas Safe registered Gas Engineers may be permitted to work on the Association's gas appliances and installations. In doing so it shall maintain effective administration systems to ensure all gas systems in tenanted properties, and any other properties under its management, are subject to an annual service; the keeping of appropriate records; and the accurate monitoring of and reporting on progress of the servicing programme and all related repair work. As a rule the Association will programme all gas safety inspections within a 10 month cycle in order to reduce the risk of services exceeding the 12 month statutory timescale.

The Gas Engineer will carry out the servicing in accordance with Gas Safe Register requirements and the work instructions for servicing the gas appliances and supply pipework.

During the course of the gas service visit the Gas Engineer will carry out a safety inspection of any non-Association gas appliances in the property and check (and replace if required) carbon monoxide detectors and smoke detectors.

In fulfilling its legal responsibilities, the Association shall pursue a clearly defined process in order to secure access to properties for the purpose of enabling servicing work to be carried out. Where necessary this shall include taking appropriate court action to gain entry. See **Appendix VII (GAS SERVICING)**.

The Association will appoint independent Gas Safe registered approved contractor/consultant to carry out annually, on a sample basis, a quality assurance check of the principal gas safety contractor's work. The independent contractor will sample at least 5% of the services and reactive repairs completed, and the outcomes and any actions taken to progress and issues raised will be reported to the Management Team and the Audit and Scrutiny Sub Committee.

Where the quality assurance process reveals deficiencies in the contractor's practices or performance, or identifies shortcomings in the skills or training of his personnel, this will be shared with the contractor. The contractor will be required to address any such deficiencies and must correct any failure to comply with legislation and good practice.

## **8. TENANT SATISFACTION AND INVOLVEMENT**

In common with all of its services, the Association is committed to monitoring the experience of tenants using the reactive repairs and other maintenance services. The Association shall use a range of means to obtain feedback from residents on their level of satisfaction with key aspects of these services. The Association shall investigate individual complaints or causes for dissatisfaction and use information obtained in identifying potential service improvements.

More generally the Association will aim to consult with tenants on key aspects of the Repairs and Maintenance Service, including service specification, policy direction and operational practices.

The Association will carry out postal and/or telephone surveys with tenants and other service users to assess the effectiveness of the repairs service on an ongoing basis. This information will be used to continuously improve the standard of service.

## **9. PLANNED MAINTENANCE**

### **General Principles**

The Association shall implement a robust and transparent system of planning and costing future maintenance work. This shall be based upon the recording of detailed, accurate and up to date information on its properties and their components and features. Regular technical inspections shall be undertaken as a means of collecting this information, while members of the staff team shall be actively encouraged to feedback information about the condition of any properties they visit. The Association shall ensure that information on repair work carried out will be used to inform the system for planning future maintenance requirements.

The Association shall develop its asset management strategies and policies to ensure future programmed maintenance works take into account factors such as stock popularity, designing out poor quality or intrinsically expensive items for maintenance purposes.

The Association shall tender contracts for planned maintenance work in accordance with the provisions of its Procurement Policy.

### **Scottish Housing Quality Standard**

The Association recognises the expectations set by the specification of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. It shall adopt a systematic approach to carrying out required inspections, investment planning and installation or remedial works, with a view to achieving full compliance with the Standard by the target date in 2015 and maintaining this standard thereafter.

### **The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing**

The Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) was introduced by the Scottish Government in March 2014. It sets out mandatory standards for energy efficiency that social landlords must meet by 2020 and succeeds the energy targets in the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS). The Association will incorporate the requirements of the EESH within its planned maintenance programme and asset management strategy.

### **Cyclical Maintenance**

The Association shall implement and publicise a programme of refreshing the paintwork and associated work, on external features and in communal areas. This will be carried out at timescales determined as being appropriate to maintain high standards but is not likely to exceed five years.

### **Tenant Involvement**

As a matter of course, the Association shall give tenants advance notice of any cyclical and planned maintenance works due in their property. Detailed information about the nature of the work, specification, timescales and any disruption likely to be caused shall be provided.

As far as possible, tenants shall be given the opportunity to exercise choice in the specification of products and works. The Association shall respect the needs of tenants that are frail, vulnerable or disabled and as far as practical, adopt flexible working practices that recognise their particular requirements.

On completion of individual works the views of tenants involved will be sought via a tenant satisfaction survey. This information will be used to assess the performance of contractors and to identify possible future service improvements.

## **10. ADAPTATIONS**

The Association shall support and assist the carrying out of works which will enable independent living and enhance the quality of life of tenants with particular mobility or other impairments. In doing so it shall follow best practice and regulatory guidance in relation to procurement of works; and aim to ensure such adaptations are carried out quickly and competently. Detailed and accurate records about adapted properties shall be maintained to enable implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes; and to enable informed decisions to be made about their future allocation to other tenants.

The Association will only refuse to carry out adaptive work in exceptional circumstances. This will include when:

- The location of the property or property layout and type makes it unsuitable for the long-term use of the tenant requesting the adaptation.
- Suitable alternative accommodation can be made available
- The adaptation is technically difficult to achieve without detriment to the property and other tenants
- Funding is not available
- The specific advice from relevant agencies is that the proposed adaptation would not be appropriate or is not supported by them

In procuring adaptations work the Association shall adhere to the provisions of its Procurement Policy and any requirements of grant offers from the Scottish Government.

## **11. ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT**

The Association recognises the dangers presented by asbestos and shall have detailed asbestos management policy and procedure documents in place. These shall describe the general approach and particular steps it shall take in order to meet relevant legal, health and safety and best practice requirements, and in particular The Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012, within the Association's Asbestos Management Plan. The Plan will set out the Association's strategy for complying with all relevant legislation and will identify the personnel responsible for implementing the strategy. The Asbestos Management Plan will be reviewed annually by the Association's Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

## **12. LEGIONNAIRES' DISEASE: THE CONTROL OF LEGIONELLA BACTERIA IN WATER SYSTEMS**

The Association has an obligation to control legionella within domestic water systems serving the properties that it owns or manages, as set out in the HSE's Approved Code of Practice (ACoP) L8. The Association will carry out a risk assessment of all water systems within properties under its control and will inspect, adapt or treat as necessary any water system that poses significant risk of legionella infection to occupants.

## **13. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The Association, through the Repairs and Maintenance Policy will act to provide services in a manner that encourages equal opportunities and complies with all relevant equal opportunities requirements.

## **14. SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The approach outlined in this policy, working in tandem with our other housing management and maintenance policies, ensures that the Association makes a positive contribution towards the sustainability of the neighbourhoods in which we operate.

The Association acknowledges the negative impact that poorly maintained properties can have on individual households and communities and aims to ensure that these are kept to a minimum. Our Repairs and Maintenance Policy and the associated procedures emphasise high quality responsive and planned maintenance services and a customer centred approach – the overall aim being to maintain the long term sustainability of our properties and successful occupancy of our homes.

## **15. RISK MANAGEMENT**

Risk arises from the Association's Repairs and Maintenance Policy in a number of respects:

- Failure to comply with relevant legislation resulting in possible legal challenges
- Failure to comply with regulatory guidance
- Maintenance costs exceeding budget levels
- Rent loss from delay in repairing void properties
- Injury to residents or staff resulting from problematic repairs and maintenance works
- Early component failure
- Fraud as a result of poor contractor management or collusion

Given the importance of these specific risks, and any other risks that may be identified in the Association's Risk Management Strategy, it is recognised that these have to be effectively managed. This will be achieved through the cyclical review of the Repairs and Maintenance Policy and the associated procedures, to ensure compliance with all legislative requirements and regulatory best practice guidance. The Association will also consult with tenants as a key element of the review process. Furthermore appropriate training opportunities will be made available to members of staff to ensure high standards of service are maintained. Budget monitoring and progress with repairs and maintenance will be the subject of regular reporting to the Board and regular internal audit exercises will be commissioned either in relation to the repairs and maintenance service as a whole or certain aspects of it.

As regards financial management issues, the Association shall ensure adequate resources are in place to support the delivery of its reactive repairs services and meet the defined standards of service and carrying out of planned maintenance work. In doing so it shall comply with its Financial Regulations and Scheme of Delegated Authority.

## **16. RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS**

Housing repairs and maintenance is one of the most important factors influencing overall tenant satisfaction with the Association and its services. An integral part of the repairs service is the Association's ability to recharge tenants for the cost of a repair where the Tenancy Agreement identified that a repair is the tenant's responsibility. This includes repairs which are attributed to negligence, wilful damage or accidental damage on the part of the tenant, their household or a visitor to the home. **Appendix VIII (RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS)** provides details of the Association's policy in this regard.

## **17. COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE**

Any service user making a complaint about the Repairs and Maintenance Service may submit a complaint using the Association's complaints procedure. All complaints relating to contractors who provide repairs and maintenance services will be notified of the complaint and will be required to provide appropriate redress/solution. Where regular progress meetings are held in the context of formal reactive repairs contracts, complaints will be reviewed during scheduled progress meetings.

## **18. PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING**

The Association shall maintain internal information systems which are based around ensuring effective monitoring, control and reporting of its repairs and maintenance activities. Comprehensive records of all repairs and maintenance work shall be held with a view to demonstrating transparency in the way work has been carried out and authorised. Information will, as far as reasonably practical, be held in the Association's Housing Management System and if necessary linked to its electronic file system. The collection of paper records will be kept to a minimum.

The Association will monitor repairs and maintenance performance using both regulatory and local performance indicators.

The Audit and Scrutiny Committee will have delegated authority to annually agree targets for the Association's repairs and maintenance services.

Regular performance, financial monitoring and statistical reports shall be presented to the Management Team and the Board for consideration. The structure and content of these reports will be reviewed periodically to ensure Board members are able to make informed strategic decisions.

## **19. POLICY REVIEW**

The Association will review the Repairs and Maintenance Policy in 2017, or as required following a substantive legislative or regulatory change.

## Appendix I

### SERVICE STANDARDS

#### Responsive Repairs and Re-Lets

##### **Bridgewater Housing Association will:**

- Provide a variety of simple and convenient ways in which to report repairs
- Advise tenants of their repairs responsibilities
- Recharge tenants for the cost of any repair that they are responsible for or has been caused by their neglect or wilful abuse of our property.
- Provide an out of hours emergency service
- Send confirmation of all repairs – including time scale for completion and contractors contact numbers.
- Carry out:
  - Emergency Repairs in 4 hours
  - Urgent repairs in 3 working days
  - Routine repairs in 10 working days
  - Minor void repairs in 3 to 5 working days
  - Standard void repairs in 6 to 10 working days
- Carry out heating and hot water repairs on the same day if reported before midday, whenever possible
- Ensure a convenient appointment is made for all inspections and repairs.
- Ensure that contractors carry identification, complete work within the timescales and tidy up after completing repairs
- Provide opportunity for tenants to comment on the quality of completed repairs
- Advise tenants of the extent and cost of repairs that they are responsible for before they have left the property at the end of their tenancy
- Advise tenants of the minimum letting standards for their property and seek feedback on their satisfaction with the condition of their new home
- Ensure there is a valid EPC, gas safety check and other relevant information in their home
- Inspect a 10% sample of completed repairs including every re-let property to check for quality

##### **Tenants are expected to:**

- Keep their home in a reasonable state of cleanliness and good decorative order
- Report repairs or faults as soon as possible in their own home or the common areas
- Allow staff access to inspect their property when required
- Make sure our contractors can get in to do repairs
- Carry out repairs that are their responsibility

#### Improvements and Alterations

##### **Tenants are expected to:**

- Always ask our permission in writing before they start any improvement work - a form will be provided to assist tenants with this.
- Carry out the work to the guidelines we give them and supply any certifications, statutory permissions and approvals requested from third parties.
- Allow staff access to inspect the alterations/improvements carried out.

- Contact the Association prior to moving out to agree if any improvements/alterations carried out can be left at the end of the tenancy.
- Re-instate or replace the original fixtures and fittings where advised to do so

#### **The Association will:**

- Not unreasonably refuse permission for any alteration or improvement to a tenants property
- Advise tenants in writing of any guidelines, restrictions or rights to compensation (for example the statutory Right to Compensation for Improvement Scheme) where they are given permission for alterations or improvements to their home.
- Advise tenants of any conditions that the Association intends to attach to any alteration work they wish to do.
- Discuss their request and inspect where appropriate before or after the alterations or improvements have been carried out to ensure the work is done to a reasonable standard.
- Give a decision within 10 working days of receipt of a request to undertake an alteration and state the reasons if permission is refused.
- Ask the tenant to remove or reinstate any authorised alteration/improvement. If the tenant fails to do this and the Association is required to carry out this work the tenant will be charged the cost

#### **Planned Maintenance and Servicing Contracts**

##### **The Association will...**

- Publish plans in advance in our newsletter and website where we are undertaking major maintenance work and ensure this information is regularly updated
- Consult with tenants about the works being planned
- Advise how the work will affect the tenant and their occupancy of the property
- Advise tenants about any delays or changes to any work we have told tenants we will be doing, and communicate these promptly
- Wherever possible give tenants a choice in colour, design, finishes etc.
- Advise when work will commence and how long it will take, ensuring works are carried out at reasonable times.
- Provide a named member of staff (a Named Individual) to manage and answer queries or problems associated with a contract
- Obtain all necessary statutory permissions before work begins
- Inspect all works as it progresses
- Carry out a customer satisfaction survey at the end of each contract
- React to tenant satisfaction comments resolving any problems
- Advise tenants of planned maintenance works completed each year
- Advise tenants of the contribution the Association makes towards disturbance they have experienced when improvements are made
- In exceptional circumstances, find alternative accommodation and assist tenants to move if required for major improvement works
- Carry out an annual Gas Safety Inspection, Periodic Inspection Report on electrical systems and any other Landlord safety obligations
- Ensure we maintain the common areas to a high standard and advise residents of the terms of our grounds maintenance contract

##### **Tenants are expected to...**

- Allow staff and contractors reasonable access to their property to plan and carry out planned maintenance work

- Allow access for an annual Gas Safety Inspection, water systems inspections and Periodic Inspections of electrical systems to ensure the safety of services and appliances in their home as required
- Advise the Association of any problems or omissions with any of our contracts

## Appendix II

### INSPECTION FRAMEWORK

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Bridgewater Housing Association has clear aims to provide the highest level of satisfaction to all tenants living in one of our properties whilst ensuring the service that is delivered covers the individual needs and expectations of our tenants. We also aim to ensure that our services are consistent with achieving value for money.

This framework is designed to ensure that Bridgewater provides a level of consistency in the way in which the organisation undertakes pre and post inspections and that our efforts are focussed on four key areas:

- Tenant need and expectation
- Health and Safety
- Quality
- Cost control and value for money

Bridgewater understands that many of our tenants have different needs and requirements. This may be in the form of reassurance and guidance from a member of our staff prior to allowing any repair work to be completed on their home. As a result our staff are specially trained to treat each repair request on its merits and will on occasion arrange for an appropriate officer to visit a tenant first if this is considered the most appropriate course of action.

#### 2. PRE INSPECTIONS

As an organisation we understand the need for the repairs service to have technical expertise within our staff to undertake assessments on our properties that determine appropriate repair action to be taken. Our staff are trained and provided with guidance on the various types of scenario that may require a pre-inspection and more details of this can be found in **Appendix II (A)**.

All pre inspections will have a target of 2 working days, to be completed from point of contact from the tenant, and on all occasions an appointment will be made by the Technical Services Team in advance of the visit.

If a pre-inspection is required this will not alter the overall priority timescales we set ourselves to complete a repair, therefore the days taken to inspect a problem will be deducted away from the overall repair priority when the actual repair is finally ordered. For example if a repair is considered routine with a 10 day target and it took 4 days to carry out a pre-inspection, the target for the contractor would be 6 days.

In general Bridgewater Housing Association will pre-inspect the following types of scenario:

- Any reported structural defect that is the potential to cause harm or deteriorate rapidly
- Reports of damp and mouldy conditions
- All jobs that have the potential to cost more than £300 in value. For example a request for a new door or window
- Requests for major plastering repairs
- Requests for new fencing
- Reports of defective or broken appliances such as a bath or sink unit.

A more detailed schedule of what the Association will tend not to inspect can be found in **Appendix II(A)**.

#### 3. POST INSPECTIONS

Bridgewater Housing Association has clear aims to provide high levels of customer service in all of our services to customers and we appreciate that the repairs service is viewed as one of the most important in terms of tenant's expectations and financial cost. As a result the Association will undertake a number of post repair inspections to ensure that the quality of repairs completed on our properties are of a high standard and that our preferred contractors are providing us with value for money services.

In particular the Association will post inspect repair work to ensure that:

- The quality of repairs are carried out to a high standard
- They represent value for money
- The customer is satisfied with the repair

We will complete a minimum of 10% of all completed reactive repairs. The Association will adopt a flexible approach to identifying post inspection work to ensure that resources are targeted in the most effective way. However the following types of repairs will generally always be targeted for inspection.

- Medical Adaptations
- Void Repairs
- Repairs with a value of more than £500
- Repairs where the work being claimed for does not match what has been instructed
- Repairs where the incorrect SoR (or other agreed rate) is being claimed for or where daywork rates are being used inappropriately or where claims for materials or plant cannot be verified or justified.
- Repairs where the tenant has made a complaint about the standard of repair work which has resulted in the complaint being escalated to Stage 2.

There may be exceptions to the above. For example a void repair which consisted of a gas and electric check only or a roof repair over £500 in value which cannot be inspected due to access reasons.

The Technical Team will work together closely and will prioritise inspection work as required. For example a poorly performing contractor or particular trade will be subject to closer attention. Wherever possible the work will be inspected after the invoice has been received so that the Clerk of Works can assess value for money, the quality of materials and workmanship and customer satisfaction. The Clerk of Works will request that the tenants/other service users complete a Satisfaction Survey Questionnaire during his visit. The Technical Team will also carry out a telephone or postal survey following the completion of repairs on an ongoing basis.

The outcome of the inspection will be recorded in our IT systems including an assessment of the overall quality of the completed repair and will take account of the views of tenants. The data will allow Bridgewater to monitor trends and to feedback performance to contractors.

The overall quality assessment for post inspections and customer satisfaction data will be assessed on a monthly basis and reported to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee through our performance management system on a quarterly basis. Specific trends in individual contractor's performance will be monitored by the Technical Services Team and any relevant issues highlighted to the Management Team.

#### **4. ALTERATION REQUESTS**

The Association currently has in place a procedure to allow tenants to apply for permission to undertake alterations or additions to their homes. This inspection framework outlines in which particular circumstances we will carry out an inspection of that request.

The requests which we will inspect will include:

- A request to make a structural change to a property. For example removing an internal wall or installing a sky light
- Requests from a tenant to install their own fencing to replace an existing boundary.
- Loft renovations
- Requests to install a tenants own style of external door
- Requests to fit a tenants own bathroom or kitchen suite
- Requests to install tenants own electric fireplace or gas fire.

Requests in which we will tend not to inspect but still grant permission where it is possible to do so are:

- Installation of a satellite dish (depending on building and location)
- Requests to make minor alterations
- To fit an additional kitchen wall or base unit
- To install shelving in a cupboard space
- To apply 'Artex' or similar textured finish to a ceiling or wall surface
- Replace door handles with tenants choice
- Make minor alterations to garden layouts.

## **5. VOID INSPECTIONS**

Bridgewater's void procedures are clearly documented within the Voids Policy however as standard we will ensure that 100% of void properties are inspected within 48 hours of becoming vacant. This is to ensure that all necessary repairs are identified and allocated to the appropriate contractor in advance of offering a property to a prospective tenant.

A copy of the detailed checklist that must be completed in full before a property is considered "ready for let" can be found as an appendix to the Association's Void Procedure.

## 6. GENERAL

Scenarios where the Association will tend to, or tend not to, carry out a technical pre inspection.

The Association will tend to pre-inspect any repairs where the damage or defect may be defined as a rechargeable repair.

Repair Description	Yes - Pre Inspection required	No - Repair can be raised direct with the contractor
<b>EXTERNAL</b>		
Structural damage	X	
Rainwater goods		X
Fascias, soffits, bargeboard	X	
Chimneys/gas flues	X	
Pointing and minor brickwork	X	
Brick wall replacement or rebuild	X	
Roofing tiles/components		X
Concrete Canopies	X	
Coping Stones	X	
Uneven Pathway	X	
Rotary Driers/clothes poles		X
Fence Replacement	X	
<b>WINDOWS</b>		
Window Repairs		X
Window Replacement	X	
Glazing		X
Window Ironmongery		X
<b>DOORS</b>		
Door Entry Systems		X
Door Frame Replacement	X	
External Door Replacement	X	
Internal Door Replacement	X	
Replacement Ironmongery		X
Locks and Hinges		X
Door Numerals		X
Door Thresholds		X
Ease and Adjust Door		X
Communal Doors		X
<b>GENERAL JOINERY</b>		
Skirting and Architrave		X
Floorboards		X
Joists and Stairs		X
Bannister/Handrail		X
Dado/Picture Rail		X
<b>ELECTRICAL</b>		
Sockets and light fittings		X
Thermostats		X
Heating Failure		X
Fire place breakdown		X
Fire place renewal	X	
Security lights		X

Door Bells (mains Wired)		X
Heating Controls		X
Smoke/Heat Detectors		X
Carbon Monoxide Detectors		X
PLASTERWORK		
Floor and wall tile repair		X
Floor or wall tile replacement to large area	X	
Plaster patching		X
Artex Repairs	X	
Damp Proof failure	X	
Mould Growth	X	
PLUMBING		
Minor leaks		X
Replacement Taps		X
Bath Replacement	X	
Wash Basin Replacement	X	
Toilet Replacement	X	
Toilets seats in (Sheltered/Extra Care)		X
Silicone Sealant		X
Blockages to internal waste		X
Blocked Drains		X
Shower Repairs		X
Shower Replacement	X	
ALTERATION REQUESTS		
Structural Changes	X	
Installation of a skylight	X	
Loft Renovation	X	
Install tenants fencing	X	
Request to alter garden layout	X	
External Door Replacement	X	
Replacement kitchen or bathroom	X	
Fireplace	X	
Any alteration affecting gas, electrical, water or drainage services	X	
Satellite Dish		X
Additional kitchen units		X
Shelving		X
Gates		X
Door Handles		X
Garden Sheds		X
Minor alterations to garden layout		X
MISCELLANEOUS		
Jobs over the value of £300	X	
A variation request => 50% of the order value	X	
Specific Tenant request	X	

## REPAIRS CHARTER

Core Commitment	We will deliver on this commitment by:
<p><b>We believe that delivering an effective repairs service is a corporate and strategic priority.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring a strong corporate commitment, leadership and accountability to deliver an effective repairs service. We will have shared goals and objectives for the responsive repairs service developed in conjunction with tenants, other service users and key partners.</li> <li>• Ensuring that our responsive repairs service is an integral part of our asset management strategy which influences overall investment in and development of tenant's homes.</li> <li>• Ensuring that our responsive repairs service supports other organisational strategies and objectives and is linked in with other departments (e.g. housing management and factoring) to deliver organisational priorities in a joined up way.</li> <li>• Ensuring that we have robust governance and risk management arrangements in place to challenge and drive performance</li> <li>• Ensuring we are flexible and quick to respond to the changing economic and regulatory environment</li> <li>• Ensuring that there is a clear understanding across our organisation that our responsive repairs service is one of the most important and valued services we provide. Delivering a quality service is a key organisational objective for us and all of our delivery partners.</li> </ul>
<p><b>We equip everyone involved in the repairs service with the right skills, capacity and resources.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committing sufficient time, capacity and resources to ensure we can consistently deliver an effective and efficient responsive repairs service.</li> <li>• Having a structure in place that has the right people, with the right skills in the right jobs to deliver the responsive repairs service effectively and avoids duplication of roles and processes.</li> <li>• Investing in training and development to ensure that staff, tenants and partners at all levels have the appropriate knowledge and skills to deliver our responsive repairs service effectively.</li> <li>• Providing relevant training and development, capacity building and support to our tenants so they are able to be directly involved in the development and improvement of our responsive repairs service and scrutiny of our performance.</li> <li>• Having reliable and flexible IT systems that support the broad aims of the reactive repairs service and the expectations of service users.</li> </ul>
<p><b>We provide an accessible and accountable repairs service</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that all of our tenants can easily access the repairs service, and offering a range of options for how tenants can report a repair.</li> <li>• Offering equal access to our responsive repairs service regardless of age, disability, gender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or believe, sex and sexual orientation.</li> <li>• Collecting relevant and meaningful information on the profile of our tenants which helps us to make the responsive repairs service more effective for all service users. Information collected will be safely stored and used in accordance with data protection requirements.</li> <li>• Ensuring that communication with service users is an effective two-way process.</li> <li>• Clearly setting out and communicating with tenants/other service users what our responsive repairs service can and cannot deliver including what we will charge/recharge for, to enable us to effectively manage expectations and that we apply this approach consistently and fairly.</li> <li>• Having clear policies, procedures and processes in place for delivering the responsive repairs service which set out the aims of the service and the roles and responsibilities of all parties.</li> </ul>

<p><b>We deliver a quality responsive repairs service</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring there is clear operational responsibility for the delivery of the responsive repairs service</li> <li>• Ensuring that all statutory and regulatory requirements are consistently met, including health and safety obligations.</li> <li>• Offering flexibility about how the service is delivered that meets the tenants needs</li> <li>• Ensuring that the repair is done in one visit where feasible to the required quality and to the overall satisfaction of the tenant.</li> <li>• Providing flexible appointments that balance the needs of our tenants/other service users with delivering a value for money service</li> <li>• Taking opportunities to improve and maintain the sustainability and energy efficiency of our stock</li> <li>• Having an effective quality assurance system in place to ensure the quality of work carried out consistently meets our required standards</li> </ul>
<p><b>We ensure that a value for money approach is embedded throughout our repairs service</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring that value for money is understood and embedded across the responsive repairs service. It is part of our performance management framework, determines how we allocate resources and is widely communicated to staff and tenants/other service users who are encouraged to identify value for money opportunities.</li> <li>• Understanding the cost of delivering the responsive repairs service. We balance the need to minimise costs with maintaining a good quality of service.</li> <li>• Understanding how our cost and performance compares with other similar or local landlords/factors and we use that information to improve our service</li> <li>• Adopting procurement strategies that deliver repairs services that are sustainable and provide demonstrable value for money for all service users.</li> </ul>
<p><b>We continually strive to understand and improve our performance</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Having an effective performance management framework in place to report, monitor and review performance. These include setting challenging performance targets for all aspects of the service. Our repairs targets are subject to regular review and demonstrate continuous improvement.</li> <li>• Ensuring tenants/other service users are encouraged and empowered to hold us to account about the delivery and performance of our responsive repairs service. .</li> <li>• By welcoming all feedback about our responsive repairs service – including comments, compliments and complaints and meaningful satisfaction information. We will use this feedback intelligently to continuously review and improve our service.</li> <li>• Ensuring good practice is sought and adopted from within and outside the sector</li> <li>• Our response repairs service is continuously reviewed to minimise waste and avoid duplication and improve environmental sustainability.</li> </ul>

Appendix IV

TARGET TIMESCALES

HABITABLE PROPERTY				
Repair Description	Emergency Repair	Urgent Repair	Routine Repair	Exceptions
<b>PLUMBING</b>				
Dripping Taps			X	
Leaking tap when used		X		
Blocked sink or basin	X			
Loose taps		X		
Replacement taps		X		
Blocked WC	X			
Blocked WC due to tenant negligence	X			Rechargeable
Leaking WC	X			
Replace flush handles	X			
Toilet difficult to flush	X			
Ball valve to tank		X		
Leaking overflow		X		
Broken Toilet Seat		X		General Needs - tenants responsibility
<b>JOINERY</b>				
Gain access for tenant due to faulty lock	X			
Gain access for tenant due to lost keys	X			Rechargeable
Renew faulty door lock of two forms of security on door		X		
Insecure Door	X			
Renew Internal Door			X	
Replace Door Handles		X		
Timber Skirting Board			X	
Architrave and frames			X	
Loose Floorboards		X		
<b>ELECTRICAL</b>				
Faulty light fittings		X		
Faulty sockets		X		
Immersion Heaters		X		
Thermostats		X		
Aerial Sockets			X	
No lighting single room		X		
No power	X			
Partial power loss		X		
Dangerous wires	X			
Corridor lights out		X		
Security lights		X		
Faulty shower with bath		X		
Faulty shower no bath	X			
Replacement Trunking			X	
Smoke Alarms	X			

<b>COMMUNAL AREAS</b>				
Lift not working	X			
Communal light out			X	
All communal lights out		X		Emergency if sheltered/Extra Care
Emergency lighting		X		Emergency if Extra Care
Security lights		X		Emergency if Extra Care
Door entry systems		X		Emergency if Extra Care or Sheltered
Loose handrail		X		
No TV Reception		X		
Rotary Driers			X	General Needs Tenants Responsibility
Uneven path trip hazard		X		
Uneven path not dangerous			X	
<b>HEATING</b>				
Total failure during winter	X			
Total failure during summer	X			
Partial failure		X		
Radiator Leak		X		
Radiator replacement		X		
<b>WINDOWS</b>				
Broken glass	X			
Cracked glass		X		
Loose window		X		
Window won't close		X		Emergency if ground floor
Faulty handle		X		
Leaking window		X		
Loose window cill			X	
Broken vent			X	
<b>ROOFS</b>				
Moss removal			X	
Roof felt replacement			X	
Loose tiles		X		
Make safe after storm	x		X	
Rain penetration		X		
Major roof repair			X	Urgent if unsafe
Replace broken slates			X	Urgent if unsafe
Re bed ridge tiles			x	Urgent if unsafe
Flashings			X	
<b>WATER</b>				
No hot water	X			
No cold water	X			
No water to single tap		X		
Faulty stop tap		X		Emergency if it will not turn off
<b>EXTERNAL</b>				

Damaged fencing		X		Urgent if dangerous
Renew fencing			X	Urgent if dangerous
Damage gate		X		
Loose paving not dangerous		X		Emergency if main walkway
Trip Hazard		X		Emergency if main walkway
Renew flag stones			X	
Pointing			X	
Guttering Repairs			X	
Graffiti removal			X	Urgent if of an offensive nature
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>				
Insect infestations, vermin, fauna.			X	Urgent if stinging insects

<b>LOCK-UPS/GARAGES</b>				
<b>Repair Description</b>	<b>Emergency Repair</b>	<b>Urgent Repair</b>	<b>Routine Repair</b>	<b>Exceptions</b>
Repair to up-and-over doors/door gear			X	Repair is an emergency if vehicle trapped inside
Renewal of up-and-over door/door gear			X	Urgent if door not secure
Defective lock		X		
Serious water penetration		X		
Roof/fascias/gutters			X	
Concrete aprons			X	
Lost keys		X		

<b>COMMON LANDSCAPED AREAS AND OPEN SPACES</b>				
<b>Repair Description</b>	<b>Emergency Repair</b>	<b>Urgent Repair</b>	<b>Routine Repair</b>	<b>Exceptions</b>
Removal of abandoned goods, household waste, and the like		X		The person responsible can be identified
Removal of garden cuttings, trimmings, building materials and the like			X	The person responsible can be identified
Removal of broken glass or other hazardous materials		X		Emergency if within or adjacent to children's play spaces
Flooding caused by blocked drains or the like			X	
Fallen trees, branches or shrubs causing obstructions		X		Emergency if obstructing public road/access for services

Fallen trees, branches or shrubs not causing obstructions			X	
Fencing/railing repairs			X	Urgent if hazardous or causing an obstruction
Damaged or defective walls			X	Urgent if hazardous or causing an obstruction
Play area surfacing, play equipment, seating and the like		X		Emergency if hazardous or children/others are at risk
Bins, benches, grit bins and the like			X	Urgent if hazardous or causing an obstruction
Graffiti removal			X	Urgent if of an offensive nature

## Appendix V

### REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
<b>COMMUNAL AREAS</b>			
Lifts and Stairs	X		
Automated door systems; controlled entry systems	X		
Fire detection, prevention and protection systems			
Communal facilities including laundry, catering, assisted bathing and toilets, facilities provided for service providers	X		
Floor coverings			
Redecoration	X		
<b>ROOF</b>			
Chimney stacks/flues	X		
Roof Structure and Covering	X		
Guttering, rainwater pipes	X		
Fascias, Soffits, Barge Board	X		
Fall prevention/fall arrest systems	X		
<b>WALLS AND CANOPIES</b>			
External walls render	X		
Foundations	X		
Concrete Canopies	X		
Door Canopies	X		
Coping Stones	X		
<b>WINDOW AND DOOR</b>			
Window frame and cills	X		
Glazing	X		
Glazing when caused by criminal damage and reported to the police	X		
Glazing when damaged by tenants household/visitor		X	
Window ironmongery	X		
Door Entry Systems	X		
Door Frames	X		
External Doors	X		
Threshold Strips	X		
Door locks and ironmongery	X		
Damaged locks by tenants household or visitor	X		Tenant's responsibility if intentional.
Additional keys		X	
Gaining entry (lost keys)		X	
Letter Plates	X		
<b>PIPES AND DRAINS</b>			
Soil and vent pipes	X		
Drains and gully surrounds	X		
Gully grids	X		
Manhole Covers	X		
Blocked drains	X		Rechargeable if due to negligence
Underground bursts	X		
<b>GARDENS AND BOUNDARIES</b>			

Individual garden maintenance		X	
Tenants own garden features		X	
Communal area maintenance	X		
Dividing fence		X	
Boundary fence (if owned by the Association)	X		
External fencing owned by the Association	X		
Boundary Walls	X		
Gates if owned by the Association	X		
Paths, steps and other means of access	X		
Rotary lines		X	
Clothes Line Posts	X		

<b>REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES - INSIDE YOUR HOME</b>			
<b>Repair Description</b>	<b>Association</b>	<b>Tenant</b>	<b>Exceptions</b>
<b>WINDOWS</b>			
Internal cills, upvc or timber	X		
Skirting Boards	X		
Window vents	X		
<b>INTERNAL DOORS</b>			
Door handles and latch	X		Tenants responsibility if own installed
Easing and adjusting	X		
<b>WALLS</b>			
Internal walls	X		
Major plaster repairs	X		
Minor plaster repairs	X		
Hairline cracks in plaster		X	
Wall Tiles	X		
Re-grouting	X		
<b>FLOORS</b>			
Concrete floor	X		
Vinyl floor tiles	X		
Loose floor covering	X		
Floor Boards and Joists	X		
Carpets and laminates		X	
Door strips		X	
<b>CEILINGS</b>			
Repairs and Renewals	X		
Hairline cracks		X	
Patch repairs	X		
Artex ceilings, patch repairs	X		Tenants responsibility if installed privately
Artex full ceiling		X	
<b>STAIRCASE</b>			
Stairs	X		
Banisters and handrails	X		
Gloss painting		X	
<b>BATHROOM</b>			
Bathroom suite	X		
Bath panels	X		
Airing Cupboard Shelves		X	
Internal pipe boxing		X	
Toilet Roll Holders		X	

Shower Curtains		X	
Toilet Seats		X	
<b>KITCHEN</b>			
Kitchen Cupboards and units	X		Tenants responsibility if due to negligence
<b>MISCELLANEOUS</b>			
Insect infestations, wasps/bees nests, vermin, fauna	X		Except where caused by a defect affecting the property

<b>LOCK-UPS/GARAGES</b>			
<b>Repair Description</b>	<b>Association</b>	<b>Tenant</b>	<b>Exceptions</b>
Up-and-over doors/door gear	X		
Defective lock	X		
Serious water penetration	X		
Roof/fascias/gutters	X		
Concrete aprons	X		
Lost keys		X	Lock change will be carried out by Bridgewater and recharged to tenant
Wilful or accidental damage/negligence		X	Repairs carried out by Bridgewater will be recharged to tenant
Clearing out lock up at completion of tenancy		X	Clearance carried out by Bridgewater will be recharged to tenant

<b>COMMON LANDSCAPED AREAS AND OPEN SPACES</b>			
<b>Repair Description</b>	<b>Association</b>	<b>Tenant/Resident</b>	<b>Exceptions</b>
Removal of abandoned goods, household waste, and the like	X		When the person responsible can be identified
Removal of garden cuttings, trimmings, building materials and the like	X		When the person responsible can be identified
Damage caused to landscaping by vehicles	X		When the person responsible can be identified
Removal of broken glass or other hazardous materials	X		When the person responsible can be identified
Flooding caused by blocked drains or the like	X		
Fallen trees, branches or shrubs causing obstructions	X		
Fallen trees, branches or shrubs not causing obstructions	X		
Fencing/railing repairs	X		
Damaged or defective walls	X		
Play area surfacing, play equipment, seating and the like	X		
Bins, benches, grit bins and the like	X		
Graffiti removal	X		When the person responsible can be identified
Insect infestations, wasps/bees nests, vermin, fauna	X		

## Appendix VI

### **VOID RE-LET STANDARD**

Our letting standard sets out the minimum standard of the properties we will let to our tenants. The standard describes the levels of repair, decoration and cleanliness that incoming tenants can expect, and will be shared with them when the property is being offered. The letting standard covers standards for internal and external aspects of the property. Void re-let standards are subject to periodic review.

Any other repairs required to the property may be carried out after the tenancy starts.

It is designed to complement our Tenants Handbook and as a minimum ensure that we meet our requirements under the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement and the Social Housing Charter which requires that:

Tenants homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair.

### **TENANT/APPLICANT PARTICIPATION**

Our standard has been developed in conjunction with tenants and housing applicants, to identify what their needs and expectations are. In developing the standard, we have recognised the need to strike a balance between aspirations and cost in order to ensure that value for money is achieved.

Our Tenant Inspectors will be involved in the monitoring/quality control of our letting standard and through their inspections, will identify that standards are being met and maintained.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

We will carry out safety checks in each of our empty properties. These are generally for gas and electrical safety. Incoming tenants will be responsible for arranging their own fuel suppliers.

### **Gas Safety Checks**

We will carry out a gas safety check where gas is supplied to a property. The gas supply and all gas appliances will be checked and will be in good working order. A safety certificate will be issued to the new tenant.

### **Electrical Safety Checks**

We will carry out an electrical inspection of the electric installations in the property to ensure that they are safe and working properly.

### **Asbestos**

If there are any suspected asbestos containing materials found during the empty house inspection (with the exception of textured coatings) we will arrange for an asbestos survey/test to be carried out in the property. If the test proves positive then the asbestos will either be encapsulated or removed. Where textured coatings are present it will be assumed that these contain asbestos and advice will be given to prospective tenants to minimise their exposure through the prevention and control of the spread of fibres.

### **Cleanliness**

We will sweep out the property and dispose of any rubbish or belongings left by the former tenant. We will clean out the loft area and dispose of any items which may have been left.

### **Window Catches**

We will check all window catches in the property to ensure they are in working order. We will provide keys where windows are fitted with locks.

### **Central Heating**

Central Heating and other heating appliances will be in full working order.

### **Smoke Alarm**

The property will be fitted with at least one mains operated smoke detector per floor or storey which will have been checked and will be operational.

### **Heat Detectors**

We will check that heat detectors are working properly.

## **SECURITY**

The incoming tenant will be provided with all sets of keys that the Association has for the property. This will generally be a minimum of 2 sets of house keys for front and back doors. Tenants of flats will receive 2 controlled door entry keys, and 1 key for the bin store and pram store.

Tenants in supported accommodation, such as sheltered housing, may wish to consent to a house key being retained by the Housing Support Officer for access in emergencies.

## **ENERGY PERFORMANCE**

We will check the energy performance of the property before it is re-let.

A copy of the Energy Performance Certificate will be fixed in a suitable location within the house or flat. The certificate provides information about how energy efficient the property is.

## **DECORATION**

It is the Association's Policy to not carry out decoration work in empty properties or to provide decoration allowances. Exceptions may, however, be made where properties are in a very poor condition. Such decisions will be approved by the Housing Services Manager.

## **INTERNAL**

### **Kitchen**

Kitchen units and fittings will be clean and in a serviceable condition.

Work surfaces will be clean and suitable for use.

A suitable cooker connection will be provided.

A suitable connection will be provided for a washing machine.

### **Bathroom**

All sanitary ware will be clean, free from significant defects and in working order.

The Association is responsible for repairing/replacing showers which it has installed.

### **Doors & Woodwork**

Internal pass doors, door facings and skirting boards will be clean and free from significant defects. Glazing will meet health and safety/ BS standards.

### **Walls & Ceilings**

Any significant defects in plaster or plasterboard will be made good and polystyrene tiles will be removed. Minor dents on walls will generally not be repaired.

### **Stairs, Banisters and Balustrades**

Stairs, banisters and balustrades will be clean and secure.

### **Floors**

Floorboards will be secure and free of significant defects. Floors will be swept and clean. Good quality floor coverings, for example, tiling in bathrooms, from a previous tenancy may be left.

### **Aerials**

The property will have a digital aerial compliant with digital switchover in summer 2011.

## **EXTERNAL**

### **Fabric of the building**

The fabric of the building will be free of significant defects and wind and water tight.

### **Paths, Steps and External Handrails**

Paths, steps and external handrails will be stable, free from trip hazards and will be in a reasonable condition.

### **Gardens**

The garden will be tidy and free of litter. The grass will have been cut to a manageable height and any overgrown hedges or trees will have been cut back.

Clothes poles or a rotary dryer will be provided. If a new rotary dryer has been provided, this may be left in the property for the new tenant to install at his/her preferred location.

### **Communal Garden Areas/Drying areas**

Occupants within a block of flats are responsible for garden maintenance. Communal drying areas will be free of trip hazards and will have sufficient hooks for clothes lines or rotary dryers.

### **Fencing/walls**

The Association is responsible for the maintenance of boundary walls and fences adjacent to footpaths, pavements and roadways. These will be in a reasonable condition and will be stable and secure.

### **Divisional Fences**

Divisional fences are the responsibility of the incoming tenant and his/her neighbour(s). The fencing will have been repaired only if a hazard exists or may be replaced if it is beyond effective repair.

## **Meter Reading & Fuel Supply**

To help reduce your energy costs, 'Utility Aid' will help you switch to the supplier which offers the best deal for your home. Your Housing Assistant will give you a form to complete if you want them to check this out on your behalf.

## Appendix VII

### GAS SERVICING

#### No Access procedures

This procedure should be followed to inform tenants that a gas service is to be carried out within their property and, where access is not provided, the procedure that will be followed to ensure the service is carried out within 12 months of the previous service.

The Association (BHA) will provide the Gas Servicing Contractor (GSC) with a list of properties which contain gas appliances and the date by which each appliance's 10 month servicing cycle must be achieved.

Tenants will receive a letter a minimum of 28 days in advance to informing them of the date and approximate time of their planned gas appliance inspection and service. Tenants will be encouraged to contact the GSC directly to arrange a more suitable appointment for the service to take place.

**Stage 1:** The Gas Engineer will attend each property at the time and on the date stipulated. If access is not possible the GSC will leave a 'No-Access' card informing the tenant of the time of the visit. The card will provide a new appointment not less than 2 days and not more than 7 days ahead. The card will also urge the tenant to contact the GSC or BHA to make an alternative appointment if required. The GSC will formally record the date and time of this event.

**Stage 2:** The GSC will attend the property as noted on the initial No-Access card or as may have been agreed with the tenant. If access is not possible the GSC will leave a second 'No-Access' card informing the tenant of the time of the second visit. The card will urge the tenant to contact the GSC or BHA promptly to make an appointment for the service. The GSC will formally record the date and time of this event.

As a final mechanism to ensure the Association's compliance with its statutory obligations, we will consider forcing entry to carry out this work. Every effort will be made to avoid this, through written correspondence and other appropriate methods of communication.

**Stage 3:** If after 7 days following the 2<sup>nd</sup> no access visit by the GSC access has not been provided or gained, the No Access & Forced Entry process will be initiated. At this point a letter will be sent normal 1<sup>st</sup> class mail to the tenant giving 7 days' notice for them to contact BHA to arrange access for the service to be carried out.

**Stage 4:** – Failure by the tenant to contact BHA within 7 days of the Stage 3 letter above, will result in Technical Services contacting the Housing Officer to ascertain if there are extenuating circumstances such as serious health issues which may impair the tenant's ability to allow access, to assess any risks which may be present during forced entry, to gain alternative contact numbers/email addresses or to ascertain any other circumstances why access has not been provided – such as abandonment, custodial sentences or long term hospital stays.

**Stage 5:** – Technical and/or Housing Services will attempt to contact the tenant by phone and/or email or in person to make arrangements for access for this work. When calling by telephone, 3 attempts will be made (one a.m., on p.m. and one late call, and dates/times noted). If a tenant makes, then breaks an arrangement for access following Stage 5, BHA will move on to the next stage as if no arrangement had been made.

**Stage 6:** – Where the intended action is to be taken to force entry, a standard pro forma should be fully completed by Technical services personnel and countersigned by either the **Chief**

**Executive, Housing Services Manager or Technical Service Manager** prior to proceeding with arrangements to force entry. In addition to this, clarification should be sought that a **Scottish Secure Tenancy (SST) agreement** has been signed by the current tenant and a copy is on file. Where no signed SST is present, **Housing Services will start the process to get a Sheriff's Warrant and no attempt to force entry will be made until this has been awarded.**

**Stage 7:** – Following the enquiries made at Stage 6, and with no response, action will be taken to make forced entry and carry out the service. The tenant will be given at least 7 days' notice of the Association's intention to force entry will be issued to the tenant. Copies of this letter will be posted normal 1<sup>st</sup> class and also hand delivered by a Sheriff's Officer. These letters will note the Association's intention to gain entry by force if no access is provided on a specified date and time, the consequences and costs associated with non-cooperation and also the tenant's legal obligations under their tenancy agreement with the Association.

**Stage 8:** – The following actions will be taken if the tenant fails to respond to the Stage 7 letter. At least 2 members Bridgewater staff must be present to witness the actions taken by the tradesman/forcing access and the work of the Gas Engineer:

1. For properties with an internal gas meter:

- 1.1 If access is not provided to allow the service to be carried out in accordance with the Stage 7 letter, a BHA appointed tradesman/men will force entry into the property via either the front or rear entrance door (whichever is likely to cause the least damage or disruption).
- 1.2 A notification will be left pinned to the door saying that the locks have been changed and the service/safety check carried out, or that the supply pipework has been capped, along with details of what the tenant must do next (contact the office to retrieve the new keys or what they must do to have their supply/heating reconnected).
- 1.3 The Gas Engineer carries out the service or caps the supply (see 1.4). The property will then be vacated and secured.
- 1.4 Where there is no gas supply (quantum meter) present at time of forced entry and service, the supply piping from the meter will be disconnected on the Association's side of the meter. The tenant will have to contact us direct to have this supply reinstated and the appliance serviced during the same visit.
- 1.5 A member of the Housing Association staff present will photograph any pre-existing damage as well as record what was done in the house and any damage caused by BHA and/or its contractors as a result of the process of breaking in.

2. For properties with an external gas meter:

- 2.1 The Gas Engineer will access the external meter and disconnect supply piping on the Association's side of the meter.
- 2.2 A notification will be left pinned to the door saying that the supply pipework has been capped, along with details of what the tenant must do next (contact the office for advice about what they must do to have their supply/heating reconnected).

Following issue of the **Stage 7** letter the **Stage 8** procedure **must** be followed unless the Technical Services manager has given his express written instructions to do otherwise.

## Appendix VIII

### RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

Housing repairs and maintenance is one of the most important factors influencing overall tenant satisfaction with the Association and its services. An integral part of the repairs service is the Association's ability to recharge tenants for the cost of a repair where the Tenancy Agreement identified that a repair is the tenant's responsibility. This includes repairs which are attributed to negligence, wilful damage or accidental damage on the part of the tenant, their household or a visitor to the home.

The division of responsibility for repairs between the Association and tenants is set out in the Tenancy Agreement and at **Appendix V** of this document. Further information is available in the Association's Tenants Handbook.

This policy should also be considered in conjunction with the Association's Void Management Policy including Re-Let Standards, the Arrears Policy and procedures, the Complaints Policy and the Equal Opportunities Policy.

#### 2. POLICY AIMS

The aims of this policy are

- to set out the circumstances in which the Association will recharge tenants for repairs work
- To ensure that re-chargeable repair costs are collected from tenants wherever possible, thus ensuring best use of the Housing Association's repairs budget.
- To reduce abuse or misuse of the repairs service

#### 3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY

Repairs for which the cost may be recharged to the tenant will generally include, but is not limited to:

- Damage caused by negligence, misuse or criminal damage by the tenant, a member of their household or visitors to their home.
- Accidental damage caused by the tenant, a member of their household or visitors to their home.
- Unsatisfactory alterations carried out by the tenant, a member of their household, or persons instructed by them.
- An emergency response repair which required to be cancelled because the tenant is not at home to allow access when the contractor calls.
- The tenant or a member of their household loses their keys and access must be gained.
- The tenant, a member of their household or visitor to their home refuses to allow the police access to their home. The cost of repairing damage caused by the police in other circumstances will be recharged to the Police Authority.

Tenants will not usually be charged the cost of repairs if:

- They suffer from mental health problems or learning difficulties
- The damage has been reported to the police and the tenant has obtained a crime reference number/police incident number

The Repairs Officer will have discretion to waive charges due to the age, health and/or disability of a tenant and to report on these within the Departments Performance Management Framework.

For non-emergency rechargeable repairs, the tenant will usually be able to choose whether to arrange for the work to be carried out them or for the Association to arrange the work and then recharge them for the cost. However, if the tenant arranges for the repair to be carried out and it is not completed to a satisfactory standard then the Association will complete the repair and recharge the cost to the tenant.

Former tenants will usually be charged with the cost of any repairs to their former home that are not the result of fair wear and tear, and for the removal costs of any furniture, floor coverings, other belongings or rubbish left in the property. If the former tenant is deceased then only the removal costs and any exceptional repair costs will be made against the estate.

Damage caused by contractors employed by the Association due to negligence, lack of care or accident will normally be recharged to the contractor, or the contractor will be required to reinstate any damage at his own expense.

#### **4. PAYMENT**

The full cost of repairs plus VAT will be recharged.

An invoice for the full amount will be sent to the tenant or former tenant but arrangements can be made for payment by instalment, so long as at least 50% of the recharge amount has been paid in full prior to the work being instigated. The prepayment of 50% may be reduced to a lesser proportion if, in the opinion of the Housing Officer, this may be necessary to avoid particular hardship to the tenant or a member of their household.

All reasonable attempts will be made to recover any outstanding charges in relation to rechargeable repairs and in accordance with the Association's debt recovery procedures. Any court costs incurred as a result of legal action being taken will also be recharged to the tenant or former tenant.

The Association may refuse to carry out any further non-essential repairs or improvements to a tenant's home if the tenant has not paid the cost of any previous rechargeable repairs. In these circumstances, only the minimum level of repairs required to ensure that occupants remain safe and secure and that the property remains wind and watertight may be carried out. The Technical Services Officer will make the appropriate decision and will inform the tenant in writing, with any appeal to the Technical Services Manager.

#### **5. RESPONSE TIMES**

Rechargeable Repairs will be carried out in accordance with the Association's repair response times set out in **Appendix IV**.

#### **6. REPOSSESSION OF TENANCY**

Where it is clear that extensive deliberate and wilful damage has been caused to the Association's property, consideration will be given to taking repossession proceedings where the tenants conduct is unacceptable and in breach of the terms and conditions of their tenancy agreement.

#### **7. PRACTICAL ISSUES**

Rechargeable repairs can be identified:

- During a pre-termination inspection
- During a void inspection
- During a stock condition or other property survey
- During a routine visit by Housing Officers or Clerk of Works or Technical Officers, as part of day to day Housing Management/Maintenance activities
- As a repair completed without prior authorisation (out of hours).
- As an avoidable abortive visit e.g. no access following emergency call out by tenant
- As an unnecessary call out by tenant/other customer for a non-emergency repair

It is the responsibility of the Repairs Assistant to administer the rechargeable repairs process as set out in this policy.