

BLOCHAIRN HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD.

Maintenance Policy

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Legal Duty
3. Equal Opportunities
4. Association and Tenant Responsibilities
5. Funding
6. Financial Control
7. Repairs Categories
8. Repairs Administration
9. Inspections
10. Ordering Work
11. Dealing with Invoices
12. Tenant Satisfaction
13. SHQS and EESSH
14. Defects
15. Contractors
16. Tendering
17. Insurance
18. Rechargeable Repairs
19. Alterations
20. Void Management
21. Factoring
22. Record Keeping
23. Gas Safety
24. Electrical Safety
25. Energy Performance
26. Monitoring
27. Stock Condition
28. Code of Conduct

- 1. Introduction:** Blochairn Housing Association will provide a maintenance service that considers the interests of residents. It will be efficient, cost effective and of the highest possible quality
- 2. Legal Duty:** The Association will meet all standards set by law, including all Health and Safety at Work Legislation
- 3. Equal Opportunities:** The Association will have an Equal Opportunities Policy and will make sure all Approved Contractors have an Equal Opportunities Policy
- 4. Association and Tenant Responsibilities:** Details of the Association's and Tenant's responsibilities are in the Tenancy Agreement and Tenant Handbook
- 5. Funding:** The Association will make sure that money is available for effective maintenance services. Funding will normally come from the Association's rents and will be agreed each year by the Management Committee
- 6. Financial Control:** Maintenance spending will be reviewed regularly by the Management Committee. The Association's Staff can authorise repairs (Director – up to £5000, or greater in an emergency; Housing Services Officer – up to £2000; Housing Services Assistant – up to £500). Staff will follow procedures for ordering work and for dealing with invoices
- 7. Repairs Categories:**

“Emergency” repairs are those needed to prevent a risk to health and safety or to prevent serious damage to property or services. Examples include gas leaks; burst water pipes, loss of water supplies and health and safety hazards. Emergency repairs will be responded to within 4 hours. When the emergency has been dealt with, other work might be needed. A new works order will be issued for the additional work. “Urgent” repairs are those which could cause significant inconvenience to the Tenant or cause ongoing damage to property. Examples include faulty heating systems or electrical power failure. Urgent repairs will be responded to within 24 hours. When the urgent repair has been dealt with other work might be needed. A new works order will be issued for the additional work. “Standard” repairs are those that are not “emergency” or “urgent”, for example, dripping taps or damaged plasterwork. Standard repairs will be responded to within 5 working days. “Other” repairs are unusual events, for example, the manufacture of a replacement window unit or work in an empty house.

“Qualifying Repairs” are repairs under the Right to Repair Regulations 2002. This table shows the number of days allowed to complete a Qualifying repair. The time starts the next working day after the Tenant reports the repair or the next working day after an inspection.

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

It may not be possible to complete a repair during the first visit if, for example, materials or replacement parts need to be ordered. If a temporary repair is carried out the work may be considered complete and another order will be issued for additional work.

Major repairs and renewals of, for example, kitchens, boilers, bathrooms, etc. will be categorised as “Planned Maintenance”. The programme for

these works will be agreed by the Management Committee. Renewals will only be carried out where the tenant has a clear rent account and has no other debts to the Association. Other repairs, required under the Tenancy Agreement, will be carried out irrespective of outstanding arrears or debts.

8. Repairs Administration: Any member of staff can complete the Repairs Report form to identify the category of repair, whether it is likely to be a recharge or covered by insurance, if an inspection is necessary and when access will be available. The Tenant will be told if the cost of the repair is likely to be recharged.

The Housing Services Assistants will process Repairs Report forms by recording the details on computer; issuing Works Orders to contractors and tracking the progress of the repair. The contractor will be given two copies of the works order. One will be returned when the work is complete and the other with the invoice.

Access for repairs will be arranged in the morning or afternoon between 9am and 4pm Monday to Thursday and 9am to 3pm on Friday. Specific times cannot normally be arranged.

For Qualifying Repairs a letter will be sent to the Tenant giving the Works Order number; a description of the works to be carried out; maximum time allowed to complete the repair; name, address and phone number of the contractor; name, address, and telephone number of the 'Secondary Contractor'; and confirmation of access arrangements. The Housing Services Assistant will check if a Qualifying Repair was completed within the required time and, if not, arrange the compensation payment to the Tenant.

If a Tenant has requested a repair directly from a Contractor outwith office hours the Housing Services Assistant will complete a Repair Report Form, record details on the computer and issue a Works Order to the Contractor. The Housing Services Assistant will judge whether the 'call out' was reasonable.

If a contractor reports that arranged access has not been given by the Tenant the Housing Services Assistant will contact the Tenant to make

another arrangement. Another Works Order may be required and the no access visit may be recharged.

9. Inspections

- A pre inspection of a Routine repair may be arranged if it is not clear why it is needed; it might be rechargeable; there might be an insurance claim; it might cost more than £500 or there have been several similar repairs in the past. A post inspection will be carried out where a tenant is unhappy with the work. The target for pre inspection and post inspection of Routine repairs is 10%
- Pre and post inspections will be carried out for all replacement of kitchens, bathrooms and boilers; alteration requests; void property repairs, medical adaptations and insurance claims
- Pre and post inspections will be carried out by the Housing Services Assistant and/or the Housing Services Officer. Photographic records will be kept, where appropriate

10. Ordering Work

The Housing Services Assistant will normally instruct the Contractor but Reactive repairs can be ordered by any member of staff within the delegated authority. The Housing Services Officer will order Planned Maintenance works. Work will be ordered from companies on the Association's Approved Contractors list, except in circumstances where it is necessary to use specialist contractors; where Approved Contractors cannot provide the services or where a Contractor is being given an opportunity to be considered for inclusion on the Approved List.

11. Dealing with Invoices

- The Finance Assistant will run the "Jobs Awaiting Invoices" Report several times each month and contact contractors for outstanding invoices
- When an invoice is received it will be passed to the Housing Services Assistant who will check that the invoice is accurate and reasonable; contains all relevant and required information; matches the work that was ordered and is for the correct amount
- The Housing Assistant will attach the original Repairs Report form and Works Order to the invoice and check that work was carried out within target date
- If the target date has been missed the Housing Services Assistant will

record the reason on the file and on the computer and check whether compensation is due under the 'Right to Repair'. The Housing Services Assistant will pass the invoice to the Finance Assistant

- The Finance Assistant will date/grid stamp, give a voucher number, check arithmetically, initial, enter in the Purchase Ledger and make a brief note of expenditure category. The Finance Assistant will pass the invoice to the appropriate staff member to be authorised
- The Housing Services Assistant will authorise maintenance invoices under £500. Invoices over £500 require two signatures, one of which must be the Housing Services Officer or Director. Invoices over £1000 require two signatures, one of which must be the Director
- Invoices will normally be paid through the BACS system. The Finance Assistant will process payments which will be approved by the Housing Officer or by the Director. Payments over £2,000 must be approved by the Director

12. Tenant Satisfaction

The Housing Services Assistant will send a Tenant Satisfaction form for every repair. A statistical report will be given to Management Committee. To encourage Tenants to return the form there will be a £25 monthly prize draw. Satisfaction will be checked at the settling in visit for new tenants

13. Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (ESSH)

The Association complies with the SHQS and the ESSH. The Scottish Government introduced the SHQS to make sure that tenants' homes are energy efficient; safe and secure; not seriously damaged and have kitchens and bathrooms that are in good condition. The ESSH aims to encourage landlords to improve the energy efficiency of social housing in Scotland. It sets a single minimum Energy Efficiency rating for landlords to achieve dependent on the house type and the fuel type used to heat it.

14. Defects

Defects will be dealt with under the terms of the contract

15. Contractors

The list of Approved Contractors for reactive/day to day repairs will be reviewed each year. The Association has a long history of establishing extremely good working relationships with contractors for both day to day

and planned works. This is a vital component of the Association's work, particularly as no technical staff are directly employed. Contractors will provide full details about the company and these will be recorded by the Finance Assistant. If a Director or Manager of the company is related to a member of the Association's Management Committee or Staff it is that person's responsibility to let the Chairperson and Director know. The Committee or Staff member will not be involved in the appointment of the Contractor. A Register of Interests of Staff and Committee Members will be kept. Contractor's performance will be continuously monitored by Staff and through statistical reports to the Management Committee.

16. Tendering

- The Association must comply with the Public Contracts (Scotland) Regulations 2015, the Procurement Reform (Scotland) Act 2014 and the Procurement (Scotland) Regulations 2016 and relevant European Union legislation and regulations
- Appropriate procedures will be agreed for the award of projects valued at over £2million and will involve consultants, e.g. Quantity Surveyor and Architect. The Association will consider both quality and price and accept the tender that provides the best overall value
- For contracts valued at less than £2million the Association will consider each case on its merits. Where a good working relationship has been established with a contractor, exceptional service is being provided and tenant satisfaction is high, the Association would not wish to jeopardise the relationship by embarking on a process where the established contractor may be unsuccessful, for example, if another contractor proposed an extremely low price simply to win a contract. A process of negotiation may be more appropriate and is the Association's preferred option

17. Insurance

The Association will make sure that its assets, properties and services are insured, including Public Liability and Third Party cover. The insurers will be told as soon as possible about repairs or incidents that might result in an insurance claim.

18. Rechargeable Repairs

The Association will charge Tenants for the cost of carrying out repairs

which are due to the neglect, carelessness or abuse of property and for repairs needed because of problems caused by the Tenant's own equipment or fittings. If property or fittings are damaged because of a criminal act by someone not connected to the Tenant the Association may ask the Tenant to get a Crime Reference Number from the Police.

The Housing Services Assistant will deal with administration of rechargeable repairs. If possible, the Tenant will be asked to agree to pay for the repair before it is ordered. Alternatively, the Tenant will be advised in writing as soon as possible that the repair is rechargeable. The Tenant will normally be given the option of paying by instalment. Tenants who are unhappy about a recharge can follow the Complaints Procedure. The Housing Services Officer can use discretion and not charge for the repair if the amount is less than £100. Amounts over £100 will be referred to the Management Committee

19. Alterations

Tenants will be asked to make a written application on a standard form. Tenants will be advised within 28 days in writing by the Housing Services Officer whether they can proceed and whether the property must be returned to its original condition at the end of the tenancy. Permission will normally be given if the work will meet relevant standards of safety and workmanship; will not increase maintenance costs for the Association; will not make it more difficult to let the house in future; will not result in risks to Health and Safety; will be carried out by qualified tradesmen, if it involves gas or electricity, and the Tenant accepts responsibility for making sure that the work meets all Planning and Building Regulations and for getting written confirmation from Glasgow City Council. If an application is refused an explanation will be given. The Tenant can use the Complaints Procedure if they are unhappy with a decision to refuse permission.

20. Void Management

When notice of the end of tenancy is given the Housing Services Officer and/or Housing Services Assistant will inspect the house and record details of work required. The Housing Services Officer and/or Housing Services Assistant will inspect the house after it is vacated, record any additional work and issue Works Orders to Contractors. Normally work will be completed within 5 working days. The Management Committee will

monitor spending on void property.

21. Factoring

The Association will act as Factors and provide services as detailed in the Written Statement of Services to Owners. The Finance Assistant will deal with invoices for owners' accounts.

22. Record Keeping

A repair record will be kept on computer for each property and house. Service records will be kept for central heating systems.

23. Gas Safety

The Housing Services Assistant will make sure that gas boilers are serviced at intervals of not more than 12 months and that computer records are up to date. Tenants will be given a copy of the Gas Service Record by the Heating Engineer at the time of the service. When a house is vacated the boiler will be serviced. A copy of the Gas Service Record will be kept for at least two years. The maintenance, servicing and inspection of gas appliances will be carried out by a Corgi Registered company.

24. Electrical Safety

The Association will arrange for an Electrical Safety Check for every vacant house before a new tenancy is created.

25. Energy Performance Certificate

An EPC will be obtained for every vacant house. The EPC is valid for 10 years. Recommendations in the EPC will be considered and acted upon as appropriate.

26. Monitoring

Housing Services staff will prepare monthly reports on budget .v. expenditure; repairs by Trade and by Contractor; tenant satisfaction and on pre and post inspections. The Finance Assistant will prepare a report on insurance claims and payments received. The reports will be submitted to the Management Committee every three months.

27. Stock Condition

The Association has a policy of Continuous Monitoring of stock and its staff are on site every day. An independent Stock Condition Survey will be carried out every 5 years by an architect and/or quantity surveyor.

28. Code of Conduct

The Association is determined to ensure that procurement decisions reflect and preserve the integrity of the organisation and are transparent. Committee members and staff are bound by a Code of Conduct. In order to avoid conflict of interest or suggestion of financial impropriety the Association will not use contractors or suppliers where a member of staff or Committee are proprietors or are directly involved in the management of the business. In the case of large businesses that operate nationally, such as banks, building societies and public utilities, this condition will only apply to parts of the business with which the Association has a direct relationship.

Where this is the case Management Committee members will not be involved in any aspect of the contract procurement or in the management of the contract, including any variations or extensions to the contract. They will declare their interest and leave any meetings where dealings with the relevant business are discussed.

Committee and staff members must alert the Director to any attempt by any company to influence a procurement decision. This would be a serious breach of trust and, following investigation, a supplier found to have behaved in such a manner will be removed from the Association's approved list of suppliers and the Association will ensure that others seeking references concerning the supplier are made aware of such conduct.

September 2018