



Repair and Maintenance Policy

Overview:	This policy sets out our approach on how we will deal with the different types of feedback we receive from our customers
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1.0 Introduction

ECBHA is committed to keeping its properties in a good condition and in doing so will meet both its statutory and contractual responsibilities.

2.0 Main Principles

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that Eldonians housing stock is kept in the best possible state of repair, that the Association's residents receive the highest standard of service, and to ensure that all repair work is undertaken in a professional and efficient manner. It is also necessary to meet the legal and health and safety obligations as landlord. In addition, the Association aims to meet the challenging performance targets it has set, to improve the service received by its residents and to keep the maintenance expenditure within defined annual budgets.

3.0 Aims of the policy:

The aims of the ECBHA's Repairs and Maintenance Policy are:

- To ensure that all statutory and contractual obligations are met.
- To achieve high standards of customer care.
- To provide a responsive and effective service to residents and to commit to a Value for Money (VFM) approach.
- To maintain the capital assets of the Association by keeping the housing stock in a good state of repair.
- Ensure that every property is warm, comfortable, and watertight.
- Ensure that every property and all local areas are safe.
- Minimise the proportion of expenditure on day-to-day repairs and maximise that spent on planned maintenance.
- Minimise void re-let time.
- Consult and engage residents in decisions about the maintenance service delivery, service standards, monitoring the service and feedback.
- Monitor performance of staff and contractors and implement improvements as per the service improvement action plan.
- Establish good working partnerships with contractors and shareholders to achieve the best possible results and to embrace VFM strategies.

4.0 Compliance

The Association is committed to ensure that its buildings and all repairs and maintenance undertaken meet necessary legal and contractual obligations. It will comply with the law and ensure that, as far as is reasonably practicable, all contractors observe current practices under the law when providing their services to the Association.

The legal requirements are contained in the following legislation:

- The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

- The Housing Act 1985
- The Public Health Act 1936
- The Defective Premises Act 1972
- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The COSHH Regulations
- The Building Regulations
- The Gas Safety Regulations 1994
- The Construction Design and Management Regulations 1995
- The Decent Homes Standard

In respect of specific contracts, it will be the Associations policy to bring to the attention of the main contractor the need for compliance with relevant legislation.

5.0 Managing Maintenance

The Association will ensure that its properties are well maintained by:

- Employing staff and contractors with appropriate level of competence
- Devoting adequate resources and funds
- Enforcing service standards and performance controls

6.0 Definition of Responsive Repairs

Day to day repairs include the failures of plant, equipment, services, or elements of the building. They are generally reported by residents in various ways or are identified by staff on site. Repairs can also be accidental or malicious which will be followed up using the rechargeable repairs procedure. The Association aims to deliver its maintenance services to a high standard, and it has service standards to highlight how this can be achieved (see repairs service standards). The association uses the following categories to identify how best to resolve the repair:

Category 1 – Emergency (24hrs)

Emergency repairs include all repairs that could endanger the safety, health or security of the residents, visitor, contractors, or members of the public. Emergency repairs also include serious damage to the building structure the purpose of carrying out emergency repairs should be to remove the danger within 24 hours. All associated works will normally be completed within 5 days. Types of emergency repairs include gas leaks, serious electrical faults, burst pipes, blocked drains, securing properties after break-in, damage etc., and loss of water or all forms of heating.

Category 2 – Urgent (5 Working Days)

Urgent repairs include all repairs that may cause discomfort or disruption to the resident or is likely to cause further deterioration to the structure, fabric, fittings, fixtures or services to the property. Types of urgent repairs include direct water penetration, faulty heating systems,

loss of hot water, minor electrical works, minor plumbing works, making good following an emergency repair e.g., re-glaze following board-up. Any type of repair to the Associations equipment e.g., cookers, fridges, washing machines etc., would be treated as urgent.

Category 3 – Routine (15 Working Days)

Routine repairs include all repairs that are not affecting the health, safety or security of resident or structure of the property and do not prevent the reasonable occupation of the property. Types of routine repairs include plastering, repairing/replacing internal joinery and fittings, easing doors etc. Repairs which are part of a cyclical or planned maintenance programme are not usually included.

Category 4 – Adaptations/ Fencing/ outside groundwork/ Discretionary (no time limit)

Category 4 repairs relate to those maintenance jobs which by their nature are going to take in excess of 15 days for example major adaptations requested by an occupational therapist or none routine repairs such as renewing fencing (however removing danger if fencing collapses is likely to be Cat 1 or 2 depending on the danger, or discretionary repairs include repairs which it is not the Association legal responsibility to carry out, but may agree to do in special circumstances, e.g. unblock sinks for elderly or disabled residents.

Category 5 – Void Repairs

Void repairs are all repairs required to bring an empty property up to the Associations re-let standard once a resident has vacated the property. These repairs may include replacement of fixtures, fittings, and any other routine repairs. Redecoration vouchers maybe offered to the incoming resident when appropriate. The standard rates are included in this policy. The Association may decide to redecorate a property as part of the void process but only when it is decreed necessary in order to re-let a property quickly or when a property has been empty for a significant period and the poor standard of decoration is preventing it from being re-let.

The Association will monitor its performance in effecting repairs in line with the identified.

priorities. The Association will keep full records on the maintenance history of each property from hand over and wherever possible the relevant Health & Safety files. These files contain all relevant information such as:

- Drawings
- Schedules
- Construction methods and materials
- Sources of materials/plant/components
- Dates when component parts have been replaced.

The Association will review performance records annually and implement changes to improve the service and to further ensure value for money.

7.0 Decants

From time-to-time tenants may have to move out of their home on either a temporary or permanent basis to enable work to be undertaken. ECBHA staff will make arrangements for the relocation and will keep customers informed on the progress of the works. For further information please refer to the ECBHA Decant Policy.

8.0 Damage caused by Police

Occasionally the police may need to effect entry to a home to detect or prevent a crime. If it is found that the Police have lawfully entered the property, the cost of any resultant repairs will be the tenants responsibility. If the tenants fail to make good the damage ECBHA reserves the right to do the work and charge the tenants. Where no evidence of a crime is found ECBHA will rectify the damage and may pursue the Police for recompense.

9.0 Vulnerable People

ECBHA recognise that some tenants are vulnerable and may require an enhanced repairs service either on a permanent or temporary basis. ECBHA will strive to provide this enhanced service and work with external agencies and its repairs contractor to ensure those tenant's needs are known and acted upon.

10. Control of Contractors

The Association will monitor the contractor performance and communicate any issues to the appropriate manager. Regular meetings will be used to resolve any service difficulties, improvements, problems, and resident feedback. Performance will be monitored in several ways, including but not limited to:

- Calculating the number of works orders complete within timescales.
- Assessing feedback from residents/staff
- Reviewing hourly rates and standard charges
- Scrutiny of invoicing and invoicing process

Any serious issues will be reported to the contractors immediately and followed up at the next meeting. Emergency meetings can be called at any time by either party if required. Every effort will be made to resolve any issues by supporting the contractor through any procedural or performance improvements.

When instructing contractors to complete works, the Association must avoid over reliance on any particular contractors for responsive repairs.

When appointed to the approved list, contractors will be provided with a copy of the Associations Code of Conduct for Contractors. This document outlines the minimum standards the Association expects from contractors relating to customer care, courtesy, cleanliness, and respect.

11. Planned Maintenance

Planned maintenance consists of the replacement or renewal of components at planned regular intervals to prevent the breakdown of services or building elements. This may be carried out when the planned life of the element is about to expire and maybe evident from the regular minor breakdown of plant, equipment, and services. In the case of building elements/components, initial deterioration will have set in, and preventative maintenance is required to counteract more serious deterioration of the underlying structure or the replacement of components prior to final failure. A 30-year plan or complete stock condition surveys will be used to minimise the need for responsive maintenance. Examples of planned maintenance include the replacement of bathroom and kitchen fittings, window/door replacement, renewal of floor coverings (if installed by the Association), replacement boilers etc.

When replacing components, equipment or plant more energy efficient options or better carbon rated products should be investigated. The choice of replacement will be determined by:

- Practicality/suitability
- Environmental considerations
- Energy rating
- Cost and payback periods

Wherever possible re-cycling of removed components, parts, equipment will be investigated as part of the pre-start procedure.

12. Cyclical Maintenance

Cyclical maintenance includes:

- The external redecoration of the village and the internal and external painting of the communal areas of Robert Lynch House, Sibert House, Kingsway Court, Lockfield View and The Eldonian office. External painting/staining will be undertaken at least every 5 years.
- A fixed hardwire electric check of all our properties to be undertaken every 5 years (or when a property becomes vacant).
- Flushing of central heating systems recommended every 8 years.
- this is an example of the type of cyclical maintenance the Association currently undertakes)

13. Budgets

The Association will set budgets annually to cover responsive, cyclical, and planned maintenance expenditure. The budgets will be agreed by Board at the annual budget meeting. The Association aims to keep costs within these pre-defined budgets.

Expenditure will be monitored against budgets on a month-by-month basis and the appropriate manager will provide quarterly expenditure reports to Board.

14. Reporting

The Association will report to Board quarterly on areas of the maintenance service, the list is not exhaustive but includes:

- Expenditure against budget
- Number of jobs completed within target time.
- Number of jobs outstanding any reasons why outstanding if known
- Number of jobs completed on first fix.
- Resident satisfaction
- Annually – the average end to end time to complete all Cat 1,2 & 3 repairs.
- Annually – the number and cost relating to installing adaptations.
- Annually – void repair costs

The importance of receiving real time information is imperative and is key to monitoring the maintenance service and to controlling the maintenance expenditure. Any issues relating to poor performance will be identified and discussed with the contractors in the regular meetings.

15. Service Improvement

Any significant improvements identified through resident focus groups, service feedback, performance monitoring and suggestions will be discussed and entered onto a service improvement action plan. The plan will set out type of improvement, cost, impact to residents, implementation timescales etc. The plan will be reviewed by Board quarterly or as and when needed.

16. Stock Condition Surveys

The Association is committed to planning for the future maintenance of its housing stock. It will therefore commit to review the stock condition survey annually and undertake a new condition survey as and when needed. Any planned works, re-let works, or replacement works undertaken needs to be added to the stock condition surveys annually.

17. Out of Hours Reporting

The Association will provide an “out of hours” emergency repairs service to all residents. This will constitute at least one phone number being made available for residents to report emergency repairs when the office is closed. If the repair is an emergency, then a verbal instruction will be given to the out of hours contractor to repair, make safe or replace. Any following on works will be completed, when possible, with-in a five-day period following the initial report. If the repair is not an emergency, it will be dealt with as a normal repair the next working day.

Any resident abusing the emergency service may be recharged for the wasting of staff/contractors’ time. (See Rechargeable Repair Policy)

18. Insurance Claims

ECBHA will ensure the fabric and structure and certain fixtures and fittings but WILL NOT insure the tenants' contents. Tenants are responsible for insuring their own belongings. Therefore, in the event of any major accident such as fire or flood ECBHA will repair the building fabric, but it is a tenant responsibility to replace any home contents and for any consequential loss.

The Association is obliged to have buildings insurance cover on all its properties. If a potential insurance claim arises from criminal damage, vandalism or theft, the incident will always be reported to the police. A claim will usually be made through the Association insurance brokers. However, each case will be assessed individually depending upon the excess payable and cost of repair. Residents are reminded that the Association only ensure the buildings, tenants **must** ensure their own contents including anything kept in garden sheds.

19. Rechargeable Repairs

ECBHA must ensure that its resources for repairs are maximised and therefore will recharge tenants for repairs that are not ECBHA's responsibility e.g.

- Lost keys
- If ECBHA has to carry out a repair which has been caused through damage, either wilful or accidental by family, friends and visitors.
- See full details in the Rechargeable Repair Policy)

20. Resident Improvements

The Association's residents have a right to carry out improvements to their homes. All improvements must be approved in writing by the Association before any works commence. All improvements must be carried out by suitably qualified contractors who carry the necessary trade qualifications and insurances. Where appropriate, improvements must be covered by the correct installation certificate, a copy of which shall be deposited with the Association. Any works that are completed without the prior consent of the Association must be returned to the original state by the resident at no cost to the Association. Residents will be responsible for any repairs to their own improvements and will be responsible for replacing them, at no cost to the Association, when needed. Residents should remove any improvements they have made and return the property to its original condition if they leave the property. The Association reserve the right to remove any improvements not removed by the residents when they leave and recharge the outgoing resident the cost of any work incurred.

21. Selection and Appointment of Contractors

All contractors will be required to complete an application form for inclusion on the Association's approved contractors list.

The Association will review the approved list on an annual basis and will report to the Board taking into account the following criteria:

- Past performance
- Financial health and status
- Organisational capacity including staff and vehicles.
- Tax status
- Liability and other insurance
- Current workload
- Experience of comparable work
- Technical competence
- Commitment to customer services and equal opportunities

The Association will ensure that there are sufficient contractors for each trade to cover the necessary repairs as per the agreed service standards.

All works relating to gas or electrical installations must be completed by appropriately trained operatives' e.g., Gas Safe Registered, NICEIC members etc... Evidence of the certification must be provided before each person(s) starts work on the Associations properties and filed in the gas/electrical maintenance file.

22. Appointment

When appointing a contractor, consideration should be given not only to the nature of the works required but also to the geographical location of the repair, to minimise travelling time and other associated expenses.

When adding contractors onto the contractor list a report will be compiled and presented to the Board for approval. The office will maintain a file of all completed application forms from contractors appointed to the approved list. The list will be reviewed by the Board annually in line with the stated policy criteria.

23. Contractors

Any appointed contractors will have appropriately trained and skilled staff to carry out the repairs. On attending a property all operatives will:

- Be polite and courteous at all times.
- Take care not to damage customers' possessions, or property by using
- Dust sheets/covers as required.
- Ensure tools and materials are not left in a dangerous position.
- Clear and take away all rubbish resulting from the job.
- Ensure services affected by the repair are working before leaving.
- Give an explanation if the repair is going to be delayed.

24. Reporting and Ordering of Repairs

Residents are advised to forward requests for repairs to:

- the Associations office,
- by telephone,
- email,
- in person or to any member of staff.

The staff member will obtain as much detail as possible so that the category of urgency can be identified, and an order instigated. The repairs and maintenance officer should classify the repair as:

- Emergency,
- Urgent,
- Routine
- or other in accordance with this policy.
- Care should be taken when identifying the category and all staff should err on the side of caution.

A contractor will be selected from the approved list for the required trade. When appointing a contractor to complete the works an official order should be used. **ALL REPAIRS MUST HAVE AN OFFICIAL ORDER.**

However, in the case of emergency it may be necessary for the contractor to be instructed by telephone to undertake works, and the corresponding order is to be issued within two working days. All relevant information needs to be passed to the contractor, type of repair, urgency classification and completion due date. Copies of works orders will be kept for a complete repair history and stock condition data.

Works up to an estimated value of £500 (inc VAT) may be ordered on a day work basis without quotation. Only in special emergency circumstances can work over £500 (inc VAT) be completed with only one quotation.

Works up to an estimated value over £1,000 (inc VAT) and less than £15,000 (inc VAT), two independent quotations will be required to ensure value for money is obtained and no works up to this value are ordered without a competitive mini-tender.

Where the estimated value of works exceeds £15,000 (inc VAT), the contract will normally be put out to competitive tender. At least three contractors must be invited to bid, and a JCT contract will be drawn. The Association operates a fair and competitive procedure in accordance with the National Joint Consultative Committee guidelines. The lowest quotation/tender would normally be accepted, subject to avoiding placement of a disproportionate amount of works with one contractor.

However, the Board may decide after a pricing exercise to award the contract to a contractor where in addition to value for money, other objectives can be achieved e.g., as part of a local initiative to stimulate local employment, building sustainable communities or building for the future and other community-based projects.

25. Authorisation Limits for Ordering of Repairs

Up to £250	Any member of staff
£250 to £500	Housing Officer/ Repair Officer
£500 to £10,000	2 members of Senior Management Team
£10,000 to £15,000	3 members of Senior Management Team

Any expenditure above £15,000 (inc VAT) must be in the Budget, have been out to competitive tender or specifically approved by Board.

In the event of any absence of the above personnel, the authority level should be delegated upwards.

26. Inspections

The Association will ensure that systems are in place to minimise the risk of fraudulent claims, rechargeable repairs and to ensure value for money and quality control. Therefore, inspections of repairs work will be as follows:

- 20% of all responsive repairs and 100% inspection of all others
- Inspect all cases of unusual repairs, repetitious repairs, resident damage and cases where the correct diagnosis cannot be obtained from verbal communication.
- Undertake regular spot-checks to ensure that jobs in progress are being carried out correctly.
- 100% Inspection of void properties before and after works are completed.
- 100% of all adaptations

Post Inspection of:

- 10% of all completed works.
- All works where the repair cost is over £100.
- All major works
- All planned and cyclical works (including interim meetings and site inspections)

The Association will monitor its performance on a quarterly/annual basis and complete maintenance reports for presentation to the Board. Any issues identified can be brought to the contractor's attention at the regular meetings or for emergencies immediate action may be required.

27. Repairs to Void Properties

The Association will only re-let a property once it has been established that it conforms to legislative and lettable standards. In order that it may be of a lettable standard, a property must:

- Be structurally sound.
- Have had a gas safety check.
- Have had an electrical safety check.
- Have a valid Energy Performance Certificate (EPC)
- Be free from pest infestations.
- Have a fully operating heating and hot water system.
- Have a drinking water supply.
- Have adequate drainage and sanitation systems.
- Be free from damp.
- Be in a reasonable state of decoration.

Further details are located in the Void Property Service Standard.

Properties will be inspected where practicable within two working days of the Association being notified that a property is vacant. The property should be inspected using the void property inspection sheet. The property should be marked against the lettable standard including the Health and Safety check.

Wherever possible a pre-void inspection should be completed. Any resident damage or items that need repair can be completed during the notice period. Any repair which is deemed to be resident damage, or any cost associated with bringing the property up to the agreed standard and which is the responsibility of the out-going resident, these costs should be pursued following the Associations rechargeable repairs procedure.

Following the void inspection all associated works should be completed with-in a 15-day period wherever possible. However, any void property requiring major works will be completed with-in an agreed timescale. These types of property should be excluded from any re-let performance calculations, so as not to distort any data.

If necessary, the Association will install extra security to the void property. Extra security covers items such as, temporary intruder alarms, steel shuttering to windows and doors and in extreme cases employ a security monitoring company to patrol required areas.

It may be necessary during the colder months of the year and when a void will be empty for a long period (eg over the Christmas break) to complete frost precautions e.g. draining down of water supplies, wc's, short term running of the heating systems etc.

Internal decoration of properties is the sole responsibility of the resident. However, the Association may provide a payment toward the cost of decorating materials to a new resident depending upon the decorative condition of the property. Allowances will be given in the form of vouchers at £25 per room unless agreed otherwise. Decoration allowances will not be offered to internal transfers or mutual exchanges unless previously agreed.

Following the void inspection, the condition of the decoration will be reported to the Housing Officer and a guideline given using the following standard:

- | | |
|---------------|-----|
| • Living room | £25 |
| • Bedroom | £25 |
| • Hall | £25 |

- Hall (including stairs/landing) £50
- Other rooms £25
- To a maximum of £250

This payment is given at the discretion of the Housing Officer/Repair Officer. In certain cases, the Association may undertake the redecoration of a void property before re-letting.

Any fixtures or fittings installed by the previous resident which are not the responsibility of the Association will be removed and any costs pursued from the out-going resident following the rechargeable repairs policy. However, should the fittings sufficiently enhance the property then they will be left in-situ. Any fitting or fixture in the property e.g. carpets, cookers, non-standard light fittings, which the incoming resident would like to retain, and they will be asked to sign a disclaimer to absolve the Association of any future maintenance on such items.

28. Health and Safety

The Association aims to provide and maintain safe and healthy accommodation to all its residents. It will provide information and training to staff to ensure that this aim can be achieved.

The Health and Safety Policy will be kept up to date and will be reviewed annually and any changes in the legislation will be added when necessary.

The overall responsibility for health and safety lies with the senior management team, ultimately with the Chief Executive. However, it is necessary for residents to co-operate with the Association to achieve its responsibilities relating to health and safety.

It should be noted that all staff have a responsibility to identify to the management team any person(s) whose actions are endangering the health and safety of others. Remedial action or assistance can then be sought from the Police or from other legislative institutions.

The Association currently undertake a number of Health & Safety checks to our properties these include:

- Annual Gas Safety inspections to all gas installations
- Annual check on all smoke alarms and CO2 detectors installed by the Association.
- Annual Portable Appliance Tests (PAT) all portable electrical appliances provided by the Association.
- Annual Lift Maintenance checks
- Annual Fire Alarm and Fire Equipment checks
- Legionella Risk Assessments

(The above list gives examples of the type and range of safety checks currently undertaken by the Association)

29. Decent Homes

The government set targets to ensure that all social housing meets the standards of decency by 2010. A decent home is one that is wind and weather tight, warm and has modern facilities. A decent home must therefore meet the following criteria:

- It must meet the current minimum standard for housing as defined in Section 604 of the Housing Act 1985
- It must be in a reasonable state of repair.
- It has reasonable modern facilities.
- It must provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.

Dwellings that fail to meet this criterion are those which lack three or more of the following:

- A reasonably modern kitchen (less than 20 years old)
- A kitchen with adequate space and layout
- A reasonably modern bathroom (less than 30 years old)
- An appropriately located bathroom and W.C.
- Adequate thermal insulation

All the Association properties meet the current Decent Homes Standard. However, the stock condition survey and planned maintenance projects should ensure that these standards are maintained.

This policy should be reviewed as part of the Associations policy review and should be updated at least every 5 years.

30. Equality and Diversity

ECBHA is committed to ensuring that no person or group of persons will be treated less favourably than another person or group of persons and will carry out our duty with positive regard for the following core strands of equality; Age, Disability, Gender, Race, Gender Identity /Gender Expression, Sexual Orientation, Pregnancy and Maternity, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Religion and/or Belief.

ECBHA also recognise that some people experience disadvantage due to their socio-economic circumstances, employment status, class, appearance, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or with AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.

ECBHA will also ensure that all services and actions are delivered within the context of current Human Rights legislation and will endeavour to ensure staff and others with whom it works will adhere to the central principles of the Human Rights Act (1998).