



Repairs and Maintenance Policy

2024-27

Version Control

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2		Tenants/Public Consultation	
3		Head of Service sign off	
4		Cabinet	

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Relevant Legislation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defective Premises Act 1972• Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 2016• Environmental Protection Act 1990• Equality Act 2010• Gas Safety (Installation and Use) (Amendment) Regulations 2018• Health and Safety at Work Act 1974• Regulatory Standards April 2024• Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018• Housing Act 2004• Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2006• Landlord and Tenant Act 1985• Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999• Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR)• The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007• The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994• Care Act 2014• Children's Act 1989 & 2004• Modern Slavery Act 2015• Domestic Abuse Bill 2019 Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023• Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023
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1.0 Purpose of the Policy

1.1 This policy details Cannock Chase District Council Housing's (The Council) approach and commitment to delivering a high-quality, modern and effective repairs service and to provide homes that are comfortable, maintained and safe for people to live in.

1.2 The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that all the Council staff, residents and contractors are aware, understand and are equipped with information to deliver the requirements of the repairs and maintenance service.

1.3 This policy recognises that a successful repairs service considers doing the right thing for the Council residents, and business.

1.4 The policy is designed to meet the following aims and objectives:

Aims

- To provide an efficient service that ensures our properties are protected and well maintained whilst maximising value for money.
- To ensure that all residents live in a safe, secure, and habitable environment.
- To comply with all relevant, statutory, and regulatory obligations.
- To provide an efficient, prompt and cost-effective responsive repairs service, that is easily understood by residents and staff.
- To deliver the promises made within the Repairs Handbook for Housing Services.
- To promote a culture of innovation and incorporate emerging technologies where appropriate.
- To provide a framework to monitor the performance of the response repairs service and to seek continuous improvement.
- To support delivery of The Council's corporate business plan.

Objectives

- To interact and listen to the feedback of residents to shape service delivery and resident experience.
- To continually strive for the highest levels of performance and resident satisfaction.
- That communication with residents is always appropriate, easily understood and easily accessible.
- To place emphasis on the quality of repair works.
- To clearly define the repair responsibilities of the Council and that of its residents.
- To provide a service that is accessible and convenient for all residents, offering a range of ways for residents to report repairs.
- To undertake repairs in the most efficient manner whilst adopting a right first-time ethos.
- That staff involved in the repairs service are appropriately trained, professional, competent, experienced and supported to deliver the service objectives.

2.0 Scope of Policy

2.1 This policy covers the responsive repairs and maintenance service to all properties and communal areas owned and/or managed by The Council.

2.2 The policy sets out the repairing obligations of the Council and of the rights and obligations of its residents. It outlines the procedure for reporting repairs and how repairs are prioritised.

2.3 The policy is applicable to all the Council staff members who are involved in the delivery of Repairs & Maintenance Service, as well as all residents who receive this service.

2.4 The Repairs & Maintenance Policy is linked to a number of other related policies and guidance including Damp Mould Policy, Adaptations Policy, Tenancy Agreement, Recharge Policy, Decant Policy, Empty Property Policy which includes the Lettable Standard and the Rechargeable Repairs Policy.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 **Reactive Repairs & Maintenance**, under this policy, are those repairs carried out at a single property or communal area at the request of an individual. These repairs can also be called reactive repairs or day to day repairs.

3.2 Reactive Repairs & Maintenance does not cover Planned, Cyclical, Void, Adaptations or Servicing works undertaken by The Council.

3.3 **Resident** - Any tenant or leaseholder of a property or commercial property including shop premises as part of the Housing Revenue Account owned by The Council.

3.4 **Vulnerable Resident** - Residents who have additional needs, for example the very frail elderly, severely disabled, or families with very young babies under one.

3.5 **Repair** – The process of rectifying a component or installation when it is faulty or in a state of disrepair; in a the Council owned property.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 The Housing Maintenance Manager has prepared this policy with input from the Tenancy Services Manager, and consultation with HPS Manager, Chief Internal Auditor & Risk Manager and Leadership Team.

4.2 As part of the development of this Policy and in line with the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards, April 2024, a review by a Resident Focus Group and the Resident Scrutiny Panel will inform the published version of this policy. The policy is also subject to review and by Cabinet before publication.

4.3 The wider service offering in relation to the Housing Maintenance Service Standards underpins the details within this policy.

5.0 Policy Detail

Repair Responsibilities

5.1 The responsibility for identifying, reporting, undertaking repairs and maintaining homes is shared between the Council and its residents.

5.2 Residents are required to report repairs in their home and surrounding communal areas, that are the responsibility of the Council as soon as reasonably practicable to ensure properties do not fall into disrepair. The Council colleagues, the Direct Labour Service Team, external contractors and consultants also have a responsibility to identify and report repairs.

5.3 The Council expect residents to keep the inside of their home clean and in good condition and keep gardens and communal areas clean and tidy.

5.4 Residents are required to undertake minor repairs and maintenance that are not the responsibility of the Council to ensure the upkeep of their property. This includes ensuring repairs do not arise due to neglect or wilful damage. Repairing responsibilities for residents can be found in the Repairs Handbook.

5.5 Repairs attended by the Council or its residents that are subsequently found to arise due to neglect, wilful damage or accidental damage may be recharged to the resident.

5.6 It is the responsibility of residents to ensure they take out home contents insurance. The Council are not responsible for insuring residents' furniture, floor coverings and possessions. Residents may also be responsible for damage caused to another property, for example, caused by flooding from their property.

5.7 Residents who make an application to buy their home will only receive a repairs service prior to purchase completion that covers emergency repairs.

Leaseholder obligations

5.8 Leaseholders should refer to their lease and any supplementary documents issued by the Council for details of repair and maintenance responsibilities.

5.9 Leaseholders are responsible for most repairs to their individual dwelling and for repairing any damage to the structure, the Council is responsible for where this is due to neglect or carelessness caused by them, a member of their family, resident, or visitor.

5.10 The Council will recharge leaseholders if they fail to repair damage for which they are responsible if there is evidence that damage is the fault of a leaseholder, their household, or visitors.

Right First Time Service

5.11 The Council aims to offer a high-quality service to residents as we believe repairs are a vital need for residents to live in a comfortable and safe home, free from inconvenience. When a repair is needed, we aim to complete the repair at first visit where this is technically feasible, to ensure minimal inconvenience for residents having to wait for the repair to be completed. Where follow on work is required, we aim to ensure these works are completed in as few visits as is possible and keep residents informed through all steps of the process.

Repair Categories & Definitions

5.12 The Council will diagnose and order repairs into the following categories which are set out in the Repairs Handbook provided to each tenant in paper version, is available online and additional paper versions are available from the Council on request

Emergency Repairs - This is when there is a serious risk to residents or their home. We will attend within 24 hours of the repair first being reported. The main aim is to ensure everyone is safe and secure by undertaking works to remove risks to people and property and ensure residents can continue to live at the property.

A full repair will be undertaken at this visit however this is not always possible for a number of reasons including the nature of the works or the need to access parts and equipment. Where follow up works are required, arrangements will be made with the tenant for operatives to return to undertake the additional works.

Urgent Repairs - This is when there is an urgent need for a repair which would be detrimental to the property or resident if not attended to urgently. We will attend within 3 working days of the repair first being reported. These are repairs that are not emergencies but need to be undertaken quickly to prevent more damage, example repairs are set out in the repairs handbook.

Essential Repairs - These repairs will normally be undertaken within 5 working days of the repair first being reported. These are minor repairs which are not causing damage to the property but add to the comfort and security for residents and their property, example repairs are set out in the repairs handbook.

Routine Repairs - Repairs in this category are low priority repairs of a non-serious nature and not causing damage to the property. These repairs pose no immediate risk and can be booked in via a mutually convenient appointment. Routine repairs are undertaken and completed within 38 working days of the repair first being reported.

Damp & Mould Repairs - Repairs in this category can be booked in via a mutually convenient appointment and in respect of reported Damp and Mould the following timescales will apply.

1. Emergency repairs/Hazards - within 24 hours of the repair being reported
2. Investigate a report may require a property inspection -Within 14 days of the repair being reported
3. Commence work once required repairs are identified - with a further 7 days of the repair investigation report

The Repairs Handbook for Housing Services will be clear, concise and provide appropriate detail to enable Tenants and Officers to understand and be aware of repair responsibilities of each party. Leaseholders should refer to their lease and any supplementary documents issued by the Council for details of repair and maintenance responsibilities.

Reporting Reactive Repairs

5.13 Residents can report repairs in a variety of ways:

- Telephone
- In person at the Council Housing office or at Hawks Green depot.
- In writing, by letter/note
- To any Housing Officer if they call to your area
- Email - at Housing repairs@cannockchasedc.gov.uk
- Online - using InterFinder

5.14 Outside office opening times only emergency repairs can be reported via telephone.

5.15 The Council will continually review the ways in which residents can report repairs, it will also embrace future technologies and new ways of working.

Inspections

5.16 A pre-inspection maybe required before a repair appointment can be arranged which will be undertaken at a time to suit both parties. This will include circumstances where the scope of the repair is either unknown or cannot be diagnosed with the information provided by the resident. Following inspection, the repair will be planned in with the resident within the appropriate repair categories and timescales.

5.17 Post-inspections will be undertaken via a combination of desktop reviews and onsite inspections. Where access is required into a resident's home we will contact prior to our visit and agree a mutually convenient appointment.

Appointments

5.18 When a resident reports a non-emergency repair, we will provide a mutually convenient appointment for the works to take place in accordance with the Repairs Handbook. Where the repair reported is unclear or the works required to undertake the repair cannot be defined an appointment for an inspection to diagnose the repair and correct works required will be made

5.19 For communal area reactive repairs where no resident access is required, repairs will be undertaken in line with the published repair categories and timescales.

5.20 Residents are required to provide access for repairs at the appointed time, to remove belongings to enable the work to be undertaken and to provide a clean, smoke free, safe environment for our employees and contractors to work in.

5.21 If appointments are no longer convenient residents are required to inform the Council to rearrange to a more suitable time.

5.22 If a resident fails to provide access to pre-arranged appointments, The Council reserves the right to recharge a resident if they fail to allow access. The operative will remain at the property for a short period of time to enable contact with the resident by phone, and if no success will leave a card to advise that we have attempted to carry out the appointment and advise the resident how they can rearrange the appointment.

5.23 Where the Council have failed to gain access we will contact the resident to arrange another appointment. For normal repairs we will attempt access 3 times and if no success, we will write to the resident explaining we have closed down the job due to repeated lack of access. If works relate to Health and Safety or Fire Risk Actions and we cannot contact the resident, we will inform Tenancy Services to assist with access.

5.24 Where the Council have failed to gain access and the repair is not described to be of a health and safety issue, we will follow the no access procedure working with Tenancy Services.

5.25 Where there is an immediate risk or hazard to property or people the Council may take further steps to ensure access such as reporting unsafe gas installations to the Network Provider who have legal powers of entry to make situations safe.

5.26 Appointments are undertaken in line with the Repairs Handbook for Housing Services.

Out of Hours Emergency Service

5.27 The Council offers a 24-hour, 365 day a year emergency repair service. If a repair presents a serious risk to residents or their home these repairs can be reported via telephone on 01543 456816 and our contractors will attend within our published timescales.

Decoration

5.28 Internal decoration is the tenant's responsibility. Care will be taken to minimise damage to decoration during repairs work.

5.29 The Council operate a Vulnerable Tenants decorations scheme. Qualifying criteria applies for eligibility.

Right to Repair

5.30 The Council aims to complete all reactive repairs within its agreed and published timescales, as well as ensuring all repairs meet the acceptable standard. Where this does not occur residents may be entitled to compensation. All details associated with this can be found in the Council Compensation Policy in conjunction with the Repairs Handbook.

Rechargeable repairs

5.31 A rechargeable repair is defined as any repair that is above and beyond normal wear and tear, or arises from abuse, accidental damage, neglect or deliberate and/or malicious damage. This applies to all residents, their household or visitors to the property.

5.32 The tenancy agreement allows for residents to be charged for the cost of rechargeable repairs and this is also set out in the Repairs Handbook for Housing Services.

Vulnerable residents

5.33 We recognise that our residents have different needs and that in some circumstances residents may require additional assistance. The Council is committed to ensuring the repairs service is accessible by all and where required we may adjust response times and increase our service offering on a case-by-case basis.

5.34 If residents require additional assistance every attempt will be made to identify any individual circumstances at first point of contact to ensure all operatives and staff are aware when visiting residents' homes, and where necessary make reasonable adjustments to carry out the repair.

Resident Improvements

5.35 Residents have the right to carry out improvements within their property. Residents however must not make any improvements, alterations, or additions to the premises without first obtaining both the written consent from the Council and all other necessary approvals, such as planning and building regulation approval.

5.36 The Council will not unreasonably withhold consent when residents make requests for improvements, alterations, or additions.

5.37 Residents must comply with the reasonable requirements of the Council in relation to any consent given to make improvements, alterations, or additions to the premises, including the standard of the work to be carried out.

5.38 Following any improvements, alterations or additions undertaken by the resident they will be responsible for the future repairs, maintenance or replacement of the improvement unless previously agreed in writing.

5.39 Where permission has not been approved by the Council the resident may be recharged for any unauthorised improvements or alterations identified during or at the end of their tenancy.

5.40 All authorised work must be completed to a sufficiently high standard and by qualified and competent persons. Work undertaken on gas and electrical installations must be carried out by appropriately qualified persons and copies of certificates, insurance and other appropriate certifications must be submitted to the Council prior to works commencing, and on completion of works.

5.41 The Council are not liable for any loss or damage to, caused by or associated with any improvements or alterations carried out by residents with or without permission.

5.42 Residents may apply for compensation for approved improvements, alterations or additions to the premises provided they are carried out in accordance with the approval of the Council. This is set out in the repairs handbook and the leaflet available called 'Your right to Compensation' explains this in greater detail.

Fixed Wall & Floor Coverings

5.43 Residents are advised not to lay fixed floor coverings (tiles, hard wood or laminate) in their homes. For some Leaseholders the lease restricts floor coverings that can be used in property.

The reasons for this advice and restrictions are due to the difficulty in removing them to carry out essential works such as under floor pipe work, without damaging the fixed covering. Where residents have installed fixed wall or floor coverings, they are responsible for obtaining the correct noise insulation and contents insurance cover.

5.44 Residents are responsible for removing any fixed wall or floor covering at their own cost to allow the Council to undertake essential repairs and maintenance.

5.45 The Council retains the right to recover the costs of removing fixed floor or wall coverings from residents who have installed them be it for reactive repairs or on their departure from the tenancy.

Safeguarding

5.45 The Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and expects all staff and contractors to share this commitment. Where safeguarding concerns are identified, staff will follow the Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy & Procedure. The onsite staff will fill out a 'concern card' and share this with the line manager at the most opportune time. This is then processed through the Tenancy Service Team.

5.46 The Council will engage with, and fully contribute to, multi-agency working in response to safeguarding concerns. This includes responding to requests for information from the local authority, Safeguarding Adult Boards, Safeguarding Children Boards, Child Protection Conferences and Serious Case Reviews, Domestic Homicide Reviews wherever appropriate.

Domestic Abuse

5.47 Domestic abuse is a criminal offence and is also in breach of our tenancy agreement. As a housing provider we have a role in identifying domestic abuse issues and supporting people affected. Where domestic abuse concerns are identified, staff will follow the Safeguarding Children and Adults at risk of Abuse or Neglect - Policy & Procedure. The onsite staff will fill out a 'concern card' and share this with the line manager at the most opportune time. This is then processed through the Tenancy Service Team.

5.48 We will work with victims to decide whether security measures (such as lock changes or blocking letterboxes) are required to reduce or remove the risk of harm to them whilst at home. In the homes we manage, we will ensure the necessary action is taken on a case-by-case basis.

5.49 Dealing with issues of domestic abuse requires a multi-agency approach and the Council will endeavour to work with any relevant local agencies or partnerships in individual cases to ensure they are dealt with in the most effective and efficient way.

Service Quality and Complaints

5.50 The Council strives to ensure continuous improvement of its Housing Maintenance Service. We will actively seek out resident feedback on the quality of the service they receive to help us shape and develop the improvements to service performance, quality, and efficiency. In line with the The Council's Repairs Handbook all residents have the right to pursue a complaint in relation to any aspect of the Housing Maintenance Service. Information collated via complaints will be used to improve our services and any reoccurring issues.

6.0 Responsibility Under this Policy

6.1 The Head of Corporate Assets and Housing is responsible for this policy, its implementation, and future reviews.

6.2 The Housing Maintenance Manager is responsible for implementation of this policy, ensuring that the policy and associated procedures are embedded within the operational delivery of the repairs service and that all staff are aware of their responsibilities and are adequately trained to undertake them.

6.3 The Council staff and residents will follow the policy guidelines and its approach to repairs and maintenance.

6.4 This policy will be reviewed every three years or as required by statutory, regulatory, best practice, emerging developments, or circumstances arising from reviews of other Group wide policies.

6.5 All staff of the Repairs & Maintenance Service will be required to ensure this policy is read in line with their duties and responsibilities.

7.0 Risk Management

7.1 The main risks associated with this policy are.

- The Council fails to maintain Consumer Standards and Regulatory Requirements in line with the objectives and framework set out by the Regulator of Social Housing.
- The Council fails to maintain properties to a good standard, impacting on the overall value of the The Council's housing stock and financial viability of the Housing Revenue Account.
- The Council fails to adhere to this policy resulting in reputational harm as a result of its activities.
- The Council fails to maintain expenditure within agreed budget levels.

8.0 Equality and Diversity

8.1 The Council will ensure that this policy is applied fairly to all our customers. We will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability or other grounds set out in the Equality Act 2010.

8.2 When applying this policy, we will act sensitively towards the diverse needs of individuals and communities.

8.3 This policy has had an Equality Impact Assessment undertaken upon it and any changes recommended have been made.

8.4 On request, the Council will provide translations of all its documents, policies and procedures in various languages and other formats.

9.0 Performance Reporting

9.1 The Council will measure its repair performance by using, and issuing, a suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). KPIs will be benchmarked against The Council peer group through Housemark.

9.2 KPI's will be reviewed annually for all Repairs & Maintenance to ensure year on year continuous improvements.

9.3 Performance against KPIs will be monitored and reported monthly to the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), Housing Board through to Cabinet.

9.4 Complaints received and Customer Feedback as part of our satisfaction surveys for Repairs & Maintenance will also be used as an additional means of monitoring and improving the quality of the service.

9.5 The Council will publish repairs performance information at least annually to our customers and include regular updates on performance.

10.0 Approval

Strategic Lead:

Sign/Date

11.0 Contact

To find out more about this policy please contact:
Housing Property Services Team
Housing Services,
Cannock Chase Council
Civic Centre,
Beecroft Road,
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