



Aberdeenshire *housing partnership*

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

NOVEMBER 2005

ABERDEENSHIRE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

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REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE POLICY

1 INTRODUCTION

Aberdeenshire Housing Partnership (AHP) seeks to provide high quality affordable housing and great care is taken in the design and construction of its new build properties to ensure that tenants enjoy the benefits of a modern, well-constructed house.

It is however, equally important to maintain our existing housing stock to the same high standards adopted for new building works, to meet the requirements of the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) and to ensure systems are in place and funds available to achieve this.

This policy outlines the AHP's aims and service standards and the funding arrangements that are in place to achieve these standards. AHP have a legal obligation to keep the structure of the house in good repair and to keep it wind and water tight.

2. POLICY AIMS

This policy aims to:-

- 2.1 Ensure that maintenance obligations under law and Tenancy Agreements are met
- 2.2 Maximise the useful life of the AHP's housing stock by meeting the requirements of SHQS
- 2.3 Aspire to achieve homes which can provide a warm, comfortable and healthy environment, and are in a good and safe state of repair
- 2.4 Ensure that the AHP provides an efficient, cost effective and responsive repairs service whilst seeking to achieve high standards of customer service
- 2.5 Minimise void repair periods
- 2.6 Provide scope for the involvement of tenants in the development of the maintenance service

- 2.7 Have in place effective monitoring system of AHP's and contractor performance, taking into account tenant feedback
- 2.8 Enable adaptation work to be carried out in order to meet the particular needs of tenants
- 2.9 Achieve value for money in procurement
- 2.10 Ensure AHP has knowledge of the condition of the housing stock and a cost plan in place for lifetime maintenance and improvement work
- 2.11 Ensure adequate financial provision for planned maintenance and improvement work
- 2.12 Enable the Board, primarily through the Development and Property Committee to control and monitor the performance

3 CATEGORIES

3.1 Day to Day Repairs

This covers all routine repairs requested by tenants or by staff. These repair requests are processed in accordance with this policy which details the division of responsibilities between landlord and tenant, response times, rechargeable items and contractual arrangements.

3.2 Right to Repair

New legislation introduced in 2002 gives tenants the right to have certain "qualifying Repairs" carried out within given timescales. If AHP fails to meet these timescales the tenant is entitled to instruct another contractor (names provided by AHP) with the cost of works up to £350 to be met by AHP.

3.3 Defects

For a period (normally one year) after completion of a new development, the original contractor is liable for rectifying defective work at no cost to AHP.

“Latent Defects” are serious faults which are discovered after the expiry of this defects liability period. Under certain circumstances it is possible to lodge a claim against the original contractor, or one of the consultant firms involved in the design, for the cost of remedying the defect.

Schemes built via a Design and Build Contract or where there is an element of shared ownership will be subject to NHBC or Zurich Cover and again it is possible to lodge a claim for recovering the cost of any remedial work.

3.4 Cyclical Painterwork

This category covers external painterwork. Doors and windows are painted every 5 years with walls and other surfaces in communal closes painted every 5 years.

3.5 Planned Maintenance

A planned maintenance programme is being devised which will identify the components, eg windows, used in each scheme and predicts their lifespan over a 30 year period. A planned programme of replacement will then be compiled estimating the expected life and replacement cost of these items. This informs financial planning and the creation of a major repairs reserve to pay for this.

3.6 Adaptations

AHP undertakes adaptations to property wherever necessary and appropriate. Adaptations are needed to make properties more accessible and useable for individual tenants or members of the family who have a medical condition or disability. AHP will provide adaptations that are of a permanent and structural nature. The relevant Social Work service will provide portable adaptations such as shower chairs. The most common adaptation work carried out by AHP is the installation of handrails or showers. Stair lifts or kitchens for wheelchair users are installed on a less frequent basis.

3.7 Unforeseen Work

There are occasions where major repair work, which has not been foreseen, is required. Most work falling into this category such as

fire, flood, storm damage and subsidence will be covered by building insurance. However, other items may arise unexpectedly, such as a discovery that some component used in buildings is dangerous and requires replacement. This has happened in the past with materials such as asbestos.

4 DESIGN STAGE

The best way to reduce maintenance in buildings, where possible, is to consider maintenance issues carefully at design stage. AHP is compiling a Design Guide which sets out standards to be met in design and component specification and this document is regularly reviewed in the light of experience. At the design stage of every scheme, the Design Team will consider the components used in the scheme and establish estimated lifespans and maintenance costs. A choice can then be made between components based on the “lifetime cost” to AHP. Known as “Life cycle costing,” this process allows AHP to calculate the cost of property over its lifetime rather than simply considering the capital costs involved.

During construction, close supervision of the work ensures that buildings are built to a high standard and components are fitted as agreed.

The standard and quality of design features – particularly external design features - will be subject to regular consultation with tenants via satisfaction surveys carried out on completed developments and agreed forums for resident representation. These opinions will be taken into account in the quest for continuous improvement.

5. PROCUREMENT

AHP will ensure that the procurement of all services required to fulfil its repairs and maintenance policy is consistent with its Procurement Policy and list of approved consultants and contractors. These are separate policies that are subject to regular review.

6 DAY TO DAY REPAIRS

6.1 Reporting Repairs

Tenants may inform AHP that repair work is required, either by telephone, letter, Email or in person at the office.

An emergency repairs service is provided to deal with emergencies that arise outwith office hours.

If the job is of a minor nature an instruction will be passed to the contractor for action. If it is of a more extensive nature or if there are doubts about the work that is required, a member of staff, designated contractor or specialist will arrange to visit the property to carry out an inspection.

Tenants will be informed in writing of the action to be taken by AHP. This will include confirmation of the work instructed, the priority attached to the work, target timescales for its completion, and details of any appointment arrangements made with the tenant. AHP in arranging for these repairs will also meet the specific requirements of the Right to Repair scheme introduced through the Housing (Scotland) Act, 2001. A prepaid envelope and questionnaire to report on satisfaction following completion of the repair, will also be included with the written confirmation issued to the tenants.

Repairs procedures will be well publicised using AHP's regular newsletters, tenants handbook and letters to tenants on repairs affecting them. Procedures will be available in other languages or in other formats where appropriate.

Appointments will be offered, by the repairs contractor, for undertaking all non-emergency repair work in occupied homes, where the work requires internal access. The appointments will be made in accordance with the repairs category and required response times. Work will require to be undertaken within agreed half-day time bands. The purpose of the repairs by appointment system is to reduce the uncertainty for tenants about the date when the contractor will require access to their house to undertake repairs and abortive calls.

6.2 Right to Repair

Certain qualifying repairs (see appendix 1) fall under the terms of Right to Repair Regulations. Where these arise tenants will be told of their right to have the repair undertaken within the given timescales or to instruct another contractor (name & contact details provided by AHP) to undertake the work up to the value of £350. If the repair is not completed within the required timescales tenants will be entitled to compensation of £15 (plus £3 for every working day) over the maximum period until the repair is completed up to a maximum of £100. Certain exemptions apply and staff will need to refer to a detailed procedure in all right to repair cases. The regulations require that tenants are advised once per year that these regulations exist and the list of contractors that can carry out the qualifying repairs.

6.3 Inspection

For day to day repairs, AHP will aim to inspect a percentage of repairs prior to issuing an instruction to a contractor. Examples of repairs to be inspected are:

- a) Those of a more major nature costing over £250
- b) Those where the tenant has given insufficient information to enable the contractor to be instructed
- c) Those where there is dampness or condensation reported
- d) Those required in re-let properties
- e) Those covered by the Right to Repair where inspection is considered necessary

On completion, a further 10% of repairs will be inspected prior to accounts being passed for payment where:

- f) The cost of the repair exceeds £250
- g) Follow up work may be required
- h) The tenant reports that the quality of workmanship is unsatisfactory

And, In order to check quality of work on a random sample of repairs.

6.4 Response Times

AHP will endeavour to make every effort to respond to requests for repairs within the following timescales:

a) Emergency Repairs

Emergency Repairs are restricted to fire and flood or where the circumstances constitute a safety hazard. Interruption to mains services i.e. electricity, gas, water is also considered to be an emergency. Right to Repair items with a one day response time will also be categorised as emergencies (see appendix 1)

The contractor will be required to attend within 4 hours of the repair being reported and will attend to repairs to make safe immediately on attendance and, as far as possible, complete permanent repairs within 24 hours. If it is not possible to complete the permanent repair within 24 hours the contractor will contact AHP to explain the position and make alternative arrangements.

AHP will require its multi-trade contractor to provide an emergency repairs service 24 hours, 7 days.

b) Urgent Repairs

The response time for a repair classified as urgent is three calendar days. This category includes roof leaks, faulty locks, electrical and plumbing repairs.

c) Essential

The response time for an essential repair is a maximum period of 10 calendar days

Essential repairs include more important works that it is felt to more of a priority than a routine repair and would inhibit the occupiers use of fixtures, fittings or services within the property, such as internal joinery, builder work and roof repairs.

d) Routine

The response time for a routine repair is a maximum period of 20 calendar days. These are works which do not directly affect the occupier's use of the fittings and services within the property. Routine repairs include most joinery work which are a nuisance or cosmetic.

Appendix 2 sets out which repairs fall into each category.

Exceptions to the timescales would only be made where, for medical or social reasons, carrying out the repair in the normal timescale would cause suffering to the occupiers.

Notwithstanding the above, AHP will carry out the qualifying repairs included in the Right to Repair scheme in line with the maximum timescales detailed within the statutory provisions for this. The majority of these can be accommodated within AHP's existing repair timescales. Tenants will be advised on an individual basis on the provisions of the scheme, including the option of instructing another listed contractor and the entitlement to compensation if the repair required is not carried out within the maximum period.

6.5 No access

Where a contractor calls to carry out a repair and cannot gain access they will leave a postcard giving contact details asking the tenant to get in touch to arrange access. If access is unavailable on the second attempt the contractor will advise AHP who will cancel the order and advise the tenant that if they still wish the repair to be carried out they will need to contact AHP again. There will be a charge to the tenant for the second abortive call.

6.6 Division of Responsibilities

AHP recognises that it is important to be clear about what repair it is responsible for and those that are the responsibility of the tenant. Appendix 3 provides examples, which are also detailed in the tenants handbook. This table is not exhaustive and is intended only as a guide.

6.7 Re-let Repairs

AHP aims to re-let void properties as quickly as possible. When a tenant gives notice that they intend leaving their property, an initial pre-termination inspection is carried out. This provides an opportunity to identify repairs required, including those that the outgoing tenant will be held responsible for. In accordance with the 2001 Act AHP before the commencement of the new tenancy will inspect the property and identify any necessary repair work. If no repairs are required, the property will immediately be subject to allocation procedures. A gas safety check will be carried out on any property that has a gas heating system before the new tenant moves in and an electrical safety check will be carried out to all void properties.

If repairs are needed the new tenant will be notified of the work that requires to be carried out and AHP will ensure that this is completed within a reasonable timescale. In general, work will be categorised as urgent, due for completion within 3 days. If more extensive work is needed this period would extend to 10 days. If the repairs are of a minor nature, these will be completed after the commencement of the tenancy to avoid delay in allocation.

6.8 Servicing

Gas and Oil Servicing and Maintenance

For safety reasons the maintenance and servicing of gas and oil equipment is of paramount importance, and AHP will meet all statutory duties in relation to Gas & Oil Safety Management and associated health and safety legislation. This will include an annual service of all gas and oil systems in tenants' homes and the keeping of detailed records and monitoring systems, as detailed in the Gas Servicing Policy.

Servicing of Electrical Installations

Unlike gas there is not a statutory period for completing electrical safety inspections or maintenance. There are however, several authoritative documents which give guidance on inspection of electrical installations. AHP will ensure that as and when such inspections are required, the necessary funding and administrative systems are put in place to fulfil these obligations.

Other Servicing Arrangements

AHP will ensure that the landscaped and public open space areas under its ownership are adequately maintained throughout the year and that the grounds maintenance contract complies with open space maintenance policy. AHP will also service regularly chimney sweeping and specialist equipment , such as door entry systems.

6.9 Reporting and Record Keeping

AHP will have full procedures in place to ensure that comprehensive records are kept of all maintenance work. Systems will be in place and maintained to monitor progress in repairs and costs. A report on maintenance work will be submitted monthly to Development and Property Committee and contain information on the number of repairs, contractor performance and budgets.

6.10 Tenant Satisfaction

For each repair instructed tenants will be asked to answer a few questions on their satisfaction with all aspects of the work. Responses will be monitored and reported to Committee in the regular maintenance reports. AHP will investigate individual complaints regarding unsatisfactory repair work.

7. DEFECTS

7.1 Inspection

During construction, a clerk of works will be on site regularly to monitor progress and the standard of workmanship. Immediately prior to handover, the clerk of works will undertake a comprehensive inspection to make sure that work has been completed to the desired standard. This aims to ensure that the new tenant moves into a house in satisfactory condition. In some cases some work, such as landscaping, may be completed after handover. Tenants will be advised of this.

7.2 Defects Liability

During the defects liability period (usually one year) repair work is the responsibility of the original contractor except where damage has been caused. Repairs are reported as with day to day repairs and are passed on to the contractor. Traditional building contracts do not allow for our preferred response times. In most cases the contractor will only undertake emergency and urgent work immediately, routine work will be left to the end of the defect liability period and undertaken then. Efforts will be made to include timescales that comply with this policy in future contracts.

This level of service has come in from criticism from tenants. Following results of tenants questionnaires on this, revised procedures have been developed to improve upon this aspect of the repairs service provided by AHP. These procedures focus on providing clear information to tenants on defect repair timescales and will be implemented with immediate effect

At the end of the defects liability period the clerk of works again inspects each house and passes a list of work to the contractor. A further inspection is carried out on completion of the work. Retention monies held back from the contractor are then released.

7.3 Record Keeping

As with all aspects of this policy a full maintenance record will be kept so that progress with repairs can be monitored and repeated problems identified. This will allow more serious defects to be identified and pursued with the contractor at an early stage.

8. CYCLICAL PAINTERWORK

AHP aims to ensure that all its properties are maintained to a high standard and will establish a cyclical painterwork programme accordingly. This includes the external painting of windows and doors, (wall where necessary) and the repair and painting of external fascias, rainwater gutters and downpipes. AHP undertakes external painterwork on a 5 year cycle. Certain schemes will require a shorter cycle if they are in an exposed location or the original painterwork does not last as long as expected. It is intended to establish a three year (or 5 year) programme of work for implementation from 2006/07.

8.1 Inspection

A detailed external inspection of each property is carried out several months before painterwork is due to take place. This provides the information needed to confirm that painterwork is required, compile the tender documents and specification and organise any work required prior to painting.

8.2 Contract

The painterwork contract is subject to competitive tender. Work will be organised, where possible, to allow painting to take place in the summer months. The Property Maintenance Officer will regularly inspect work with a final inspection undertaken prior to passing accounts for payment.

9. **PLANNED MAINTENANCE**

Planned maintenance covers the replacement of items subject to routine repair which are at the end of their useful life, where the replacement can be predicted and planned for. The SHQS requirements are also complied with in the replacement programme. Such elements include windows, doors, kitchen fitments, bathroom fitments, rainwater goods, emergency equipment and heating systems.

AHP will ensure that its information systems to record all maintenance work carried out and also has specialist software to assist in planning and costing future maintenance work. The methodology used to arrive at planned maintenance programmes and costs is as follows:

9.1 Inspection

In order to have full knowledge of the condition of the housing stock regular maintenance inspections are undertaken. These coincide with the 5 yearly cycle of painterwork. Inspections will involve a full external survey of every property (needed in any case to inform the painterwork contract) as well as a thorough survey of a sample of properties internally. The sample will comprise at least 10% of properties in each development and will include one of each house type. The purpose of the inspection will be to

assess the performance of components within the house. This information will be used to adjust planned replacement timescales and other defects. It will also be used to check compliance against the Scottish Housing Quality Standard with any deficiencies addressed by incorporating work in the future planned maintenance programme. If inspections show a new defect or work needing attention within the next year a larger sample of inspections will be undertaken. Inspections will be formally recorded and information used to revise standard replacement schedules on a scheme by scheme basis.

Additional inspections may be undertaken for housing management purposes including re-let activities. Any maintenance problems highlighted would prompt further inspection and investigation.

9.2 Prediction

Standard replacement components, expected lifespans and costs will be devised based on standard house types. This information will be revised on a scheme by scheme basis to take account of variations between schemes and information arising from inspections.

In a typical house for example, a total of c48 components are identified including:-

<u>Component</u>	<u>Expected life</u>	<u>Replacement cost</u>
Gas central heating system	20 years	£3,500
External doors	25 years	£900
Windows	40 years	£2,500

9.3 Programme of Work

Specialist software is used to plot replacements over time to arrive at a works programme for the entire stock, to coincide with the Business Plan, for the next 30 years. As above, this is revised annually to take account of information from inspections and other sources.

9.4 Costings

An estimated cost is applied to every replacement item including works, VAT, fees and staff time as appropriate. Again this is based on standard costs devised from various sources such as recent tenders, industry advice on costs, consultants advice etc. Replacement standards are in line with specifications in our design guide for new properties, which again vary over time.

9.5 Tenant involvement

Tenants will be given advance notice of cyclical and planned maintenance work. Wherever possible they will be consulted on the works and given a choice e.g. in the colour of a new kitchen. On completion of works tenants views will be sought via a tenant satisfaction survey. This information will be used to assess the performance of contractors and to bring about service improvements in future.

10. ADAPTATIONS

AHP recognises that over time the housing requirements of its tenants may change because of changing physical abilities of the tenant or a member of the family. AHP are committed to assisting with the provision of adaptations to properties wherever such needs have been identified.

10.1 Aims

In carrying out adaptations AHP will aim to:-

- Enhance the quality of life for tenants with impaired mobility
- Ensure adaptations are carried out quickly and competently
- Ensure adaptations are carried out in consultation with the tenant and in line with professional advice from an Occupational Therapist (OT)
- Secure appropriate funding for the adaptations, normally from Communities Scotland.

10.2 Methodology

Referrals

- Self referral
- A recommendation from the tenant's GP
- A recommendation from the OT

Referrals received from individuals or GPs will be immediately passed to the OT who will carry out an assessment and provide a detailed recommendation of the work required. The exception will be GP referrals for minor works that can go ahead without the OT assessment.

Accepting a Recommendation

On receipt of a recommendation, AHP staff and the OT, will visit the tenant in their home. The purpose of the visit is to involve the tenant in discussions about the extent and nature of the work. This may not be necessary for minor work such as the installation of handrails.

On agreeing to proceed, AHP will write to the tenant confirming the work to be done and specifying timescales for its completion.

Refusing a Recommendation

In exceptional circumstances, AHP may refuse to carry out an adaptation. Each case will be considered on its merit but the following guidelines will apply:

- The location of the property makes it unsuitable for the long-term use of the tenant e.g. installing a shower in a top floor flat when the tenant is unlikely to be able to find the flat accessible in the long term.
- Where suitable alternative accommodation can be made available.
- Where the alteration is technically difficult to achieve without detriment to the property and other tenants
- Where funding is not available

In such cases both the OT and tenant will be advised of AHP's decision and the reasons for it.

10.3 Procurement of Adaptations

Communities Scotland procedures differ from AHP's procurement policy in terms of the financial limits for tendering, and as they are providing funding. Their policy will apply as follows:

Work under £1,000	1 quote.
Work between 1,001 and £4,500	3 quotes.
Work between £4,501 and £15,000	3 quotes + prior approval of Communities Scotland.
Work in excess of £15,001	Tender.

In all other respects, AHP's procurement policy will apply.

10.4 Timescales

The following target timescales will apply:-

Referral to OT		1 week
Time from receipt of OT recommendation to home visit		2 weeks
Time to inform tenant that work will/will not proceed		1 week
Time between agreeing work and carrying it out		
	Minor work	1 month
	Major work	3months
Major work requiring building warrant		6months

10.5 Reporting & Record Keeping

Adaptations carried out will be reported to Board annually.

All adaptations carried out will be recorded on the maintenance database to ensure that any regular maintenance work is carried out. Should the tenancy end, every effort will be made to ensure that the next tenant can make use of the adaptation rather than having it removed.

10.6 Unforeseen Work

Should major unforeseen work arise the problem will be fully investigated, possibly involving professional consultants, and a full recommendation will be submitted to D & P Committee prior to work being undertaken.

11. RIGHT TO COMPENSATION FOR IMPROVEMENTS

Legislation introduced in 2002 gives tenants the right to receive compensation for certain improvements they have carried out to their homes when their tenancy ends. The legislation establishes the qualifying improvements, the notional life of the improvement, the formula for calculating compensation, minimum and maximum amounts payable, timescales for processing claims and the various qualifications that apply. Staff will therefore need to refer to a detailed procedure on the subject if a claim is received. Tenants will be provided with information in the tenants handbook.

12. FUNDING

AHP has provision for funding through the 30 year Business Plan as follows:

12.1 Day to Day Repairs

AHP's annual budget and quarterly management accounts contain provision for day to day repairs under "Current Repairs & Maintenance". Spend against budget is reported to the Board quarterly with the budget broken down into the following headings: voids & re-let repairs, gas servicing, annual servicing, current repairs & maintenance, improvement work, landscape maintenance, recharges, miscellaneous, insurance claims and right to repair/compensation.

Rechargeable repairs

AHP provides a comprehensive repairs service with only very few items being considered to be the responsibility of the tenant. This reflects the statutory obligations that AHP has under the Housing (Scotland) Act, 2001. A clear division of responsibility has been agreed by the Board and is incorporated into the Tenants Handbook.

The exception to this is where a repair becomes necessary as a result of the wilful, negligent or accidental actions of the tenant's household rather than through fair wear and tear. In addition, under the terms of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement, AHP will not be responsible for repairing damage caused by the Police or other agency lawfully forcing entry to a property.

Under such circumstances, the tenant will be advised of the estimated cost of replacement / repair and be required to lodge this sum with AHP prior to work proceeding. A final account will then be processed when the work is complete.

In an emergency situation and at the discretion of the contractor on call, the above procedure can be dispensed with but vigorous efforts will be made to recover costs after the event.

12.2 Defects

The contractor meets the cost of rectifying defects during the defect liability period. AHP retains a percentage of the contract sum as specified in the building contract that is only released when AHP is satisfied that all defects have been attended to.

In design & build contracts AHP obtains National House Building Council (NHBC) or Zurich cover. The cost of this is contained in total scheme costs and is an approved cost in terms of capital funding from Communities Scotland. This provides 10 year cover for structural defects. If such a problem arises that cannot be resolved with the contractor / consultants a claim will be submitted to NHBC or Zurich.

Partnership contracts may have different arrangements over retention monies and NHBC/Zurich cover but the contractor will remain responsible for carrying out defect work.

12.3 Cyclical Painterwork

Each year a sum of money is taken from rental income into a cyclical maintenance budget. This budget is then used to fund the annual painterwork contract. These sums are subject to regular review.

12.4 Planned Maintenance

The planned maintenance programme outlined above is costed, translated into a net present value and a calculation is made of the amount of money required to be set aside from rental income each year to cover planned expenditure. It is in the nature of these funds that little requires to be spent when the houses are new with extensive contracts starting when the property is 15 years old. Thus for AHP the fund will build up significant sums for the next

few years before higher levels of expenditure are required from 2015 onwards as our newer stock reaches 15 years.

12.5 Adaptations

Funding for adaptation work is obtained from Communities Scotland via its Stage 3 adaptation budget, part of AHP's HAG allocation. All agreed work will be undertaken unless the budget has been exceeded. In this event discussions would be held with Communities Scotland to seek an increased allocation or payment in the next financial year. If no funding is available a specific report will be made to Development and Property Committee with a recommendation regarding funding. Should funding problems persist a priority system could be introduced.

12.6 Unforeseen Work

AHP has no specific contingency fund to pay for unforeseen work that may arise. In some cases the work will be subject to an insurance claim. Where AHP must meet the cost itself this will be paid for either from the current repairs and maintenance budget or, if a capital item, from the major repairs fund. Budget adjustments would require to be made accordingly in line with financial regulations.

13. CUSTOMER SERVICE

The ethos of this policy is to ensure that all policy aims are met but critically that tenants receive an efficient and responsive service and have input into developing this service.

AHP's Tenant Participation Policy establishes the framework for such consultation and AHP is committed to seeking out and listening to the views of tenants.

In particular, tenant views will be sought on:-

Design standards

Building quality

Policy changes

Planned maintenance & cyclical painterwork programmes

Repairs service, standards and specification

Selection and monitoring of contractors

Performance monitoring and review

Detailed information on the repairs service will be contained in the Tenants Handbook and will be explained to tenants at the commencement of their tenancy. Particular attention will be given to the need to communicate effectively with people with special needs.

14. COMPLAINTS

Any tenant not satisfied with any aspect of the repairs service can pursue a complaint in accordance with AHP's published Complaints Procedure.

15. Other Related Governance Documents

Strategic Plan 2005 – 2009
 Property Services Strategy
 SHQS Delivery Plan
 Estate Management Policy
 Tenant Participation Policy
 Compensation Policy
 Equality & Diversity Policy
 Complaints Policy
 Procurement Policy
 Standing Financial Procedures
 Schedule of Delegated Authority

Policy reference number	PSM
Current version approved	November 2005
Policy approved by	Development & Property Committee
Date of next review	November 2008
Policy complies with	Performance Standard AS1.7

Our Response Times and Categories

AHP require our contractors to adhere to our categories and response times. The required completion date will be clearly identified on the works order. In emergencies, work will be verbally requested and a works order will then be faxed to you immediately. A contact telephone number will be provided for you to arrange access directly with the tenant.

Our response times are listed below:

Repair category	Response	Example
EMERGENCY	4 HOURS (Attend on site)	Fire, flood, break in
24 HOUR	24 HOURS	Water Leaks / Blockages / No Hot Water / No Heating - Gas (where this is only source of heat)
URGENT	3 WORK DAYS	Roof Leaks / Faulty Locks / Electrical Repairs / Plumbing Repairs / Security issues
ESSENTIAL	10 WORK DAYS	Internal joinery, building work roof repairs
ROUTINE	20 WORK DAYS	External works, cosmetic repairs

Inspection

The Property Team are required to inspect a property in need of a technical input or a more serious defect or repair within 5 work days of notification of the requirement to inspect. The Housing Section will thereafter be notified of the action required, alternatively a works order will be issued directly within the response times stated above.

Void Properties

All the repairs to a void property must be complete within 5 working days. You must carry out your work and return all keys to our office as quickly as possible. Keys not returned promptly which result in AHP incurring unnecessary rent loss will be charged to you and deducted from your invoice. In cases where substantial work is required this can be extended to 10 working days.

Inspection

The Housing Section is required to carry out a void inspection within 48 hours of receiving the keys. Where there are major repairs or more complex technical issues involved the Property Team will carryout the inspection within a further 48 hour period.

The table below gives an indication of who is responsible for repairing specific items relating to your home:

BATHROOM	AHP	Tenant
Bath	x	
Shower unit (if we fitted it)	x	
Shower unit (if you fitted it)		x
Toilet cistern	x	
Toilet seat	x	
Washbasin	x	

CENTRAL HEATING	AHP	Tenant
Chimney and flue (the structure)	x	
Coal bunker	x	
All electric central-heating systems (if we have fitted them)	x	
All gas-fired central heating (if we have fitted them)	x	
Solid-fuel central-heating systems and open fires, including a one-yearly chimney sweep (if we have fitted them)	x	
Fireplace tiles	x	
Heating systems you have fitted if there is a problem during the first 12 months		x
Heating systems you have fitted if there is a problem after 12 months	x	
Fire fronts, fire grates and ash pans that are not part of the heating system	x	

DOORS	AHP	Tenant
External doors, including handles, locks and glass (if you have not damaged them)	x	
Internal doors, including handles, locks and glass (if you have not damaged them)	x	
Lost keys		x
Door bells (if we have fitted them)	x	
Security chains (if we have fitted them)	x	
Draught excluders and draught strips to external doors only	x	

ELECTRICAL	AHP	Tenant
Main TV aerial		x
Immersion heater	x	
Light fittings (if we have fitted them)	x	
Extractor fans	x	
Smoke alarms	x	
Carbon monoxide detectors	x	
Power sockets	x	
Light switches	x	
Light pendants	x	
Shared hall and stair lighting	x	
TV aerial outlets (other than main aerial outlet)		x
Wiring and circuits, including the fuse box but not the meter	x	
Electric fires (if you have fitted them)		x
Plugs and fuses		x
Fluorescent light tubes		x
Outside lights to the front and back of the house (if we have fitted them)	x	

KITCHEN	AHP	Tenant
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Cooker		x
Cooker socket	x	
Kitchen units	x	
Sink bowl and drainer	x	

PLUMBING	AHP	Tenant
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Drains blocked outside	x	
Drains blocked inside	x	
Cold-water supply and storage tank	x	
Rainwater pipes and gutters	x	
Hot-water supply and storage tank	x	
Sink plug and chains		x
Blocked sink (if you have caused it)		x
Blocked toilet (if you have caused it)		x

STRUCTURE	AHP	Tenant
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Ceilings and walls	x	
Damp-proof course	x	
Floors (not carpets, vinyl or other floor coverings)	x	
Outside woodwork	x	
Roughcast to outside walls	x	
Staircases inside	x	
Entrance steps	x	
Roof structure and covering	x	

WINDOWS	AHP	Tenant
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Catches and ironmongery on windows, including double-glazing units (if you have not damaged them)	x	
Window sills	x	
Window frames (timber and PVC)	x	
Glass in windows, including double-glazed units you have damaged (unless proved to be caused by vandalism)		x

OTHER ITEMS	AHP	Tenant
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Washing Machine fittings (if we have fitted them)	x	
Clothes poles and rotary dryers	x	
Outside decoration (building only)	x	
Fencing (if we have put it up)	x	
Paths (if we have fitted them)	x	
Garages (if we have provided them)	x	
Clothes lines and cords		x
Pest control		x
Your own sheds, garages and fences		x
Any alteration or improvement you have carried out to the property		x

ABERDEENSHIRE HOUSING PARTNERSHIP

Right to Repair

Housing (Scotland) Act 2001

What is the right to repair?

From 30 September 2002, under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Scottish secure tenants and short Scottish secure tenants have the right to have small urgent repairs carried out by their landlord within a given timescale. This is called the Right to Repair scheme.

The Right to Repair scheme applies to all tenants of local authorities, housing associations (including tenants who are members of fully mutual co-operative housing associations), and water and sewerage authorities.

If you are a Scottish Homes tenant your existing right to repair will continue.

What repairs come under the Right to Repair Scheme?

The scheme covers certain repairs up to the value of £350. These repairs are known as 'qualifying' repairs. They include:

- unsafe power or lighting sockets or electrical fittings;
- loss or part loss of electric power;
- loss or part loss of gas supply;
- a blocked flue to an open fire or boiler;
- external windows, doors or locks which are not secure;
- loss or part loss of space or water heating if no alternative heating is available;
- toilets which do not flush (if there is no other toilet in the house);
- blocked or leaking foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans (if there is no other toilet in the house);
- a blocked sink, bath or basin;
- loss or part loss of water supply;

- significant leaking or flooding from a water or heating pipe, tank or cistern;
- unsafe rotten timber flooring or stair treads;
- unsafe access to a path or step;
- loose or detached bannisters or handrails; and
- a broken mechanical extractor fan in a kitchen or bathroom which has no external window or door.

Your landlord will be able to tell you if a repair you need is included in the scheme. They will also let you know:

- the maximum time the repair must be done in; and
- how they deal with repairs that are not covered by the scheme.

What happens when I report a repair?

When you report a repair, your landlord will let you know whether it is their responsibility and whether it is a qualifying repair under the Right to Repair scheme. Your landlord may need to inspect your home to find out whether the repair is a qualifying repair or not.

If the repair does qualify under the scheme, your landlord will:

- tell you the maximum time allowed to carry out the repair;
- tell you the last day of that period;
- explain your rights under the Right to Repair scheme;
- give you the name, address and phone number of their usual contractor and at least one other contractor from a list; and
- make arrangements with you to get into your home to carry out the repair.

How long does my landlord have to carry out the repair?

Repair times depend on the type of repair.

If your toilet is not flushing, your landlord usually has one working day to come and repair it. But they have three working days to mend a loose bannister rail and seven working days to mend a broken extractor fan in your bathroom or kitchen. These times are set by law, not by your landlord.

Sometimes there may be circumstances which your landlord or the contractor has no control over which make it impossible to do the repair within the maximum time (for example, severe weather). In these circumstances your landlord may need to make temporary arrangements and to extend the maximum time. If they are going to do this, they must let you know.

What happens if the work is not done in time?

If your landlord's usual contractor does not start the qualifying repair within the time limit set, you can tell another contractor from the landlord's list to carry out the repair. You cannot use a contractor who is not on your landlord's list. The other contractor will then tell your landlord that you have asked them to carry out the repair. The landlord will then pay you £15 compensation for the inconvenience. If your landlord's main contractor has started but not completed the repair within the maximum time, you will also be entitled to £15 compensation.

How long does the other contractor have to complete the repair?

The other contractor has the same length of time to carry out the repair as the landlord's main contractor. If they do not carry out the repair within the time limit set, you will be entitled to another £3 compensation for each working day until the repair has been completed. This amount can add up to a maximum compensation payment of £100 for any one repair.

What if there is no other contractor available?

In this case, your landlord's main contractor will carry out the repair but you will still be entitled to the £15 compensation payment.

What happens if I am out when the contractor calls to carry out the inspection or repair?

If the contractor cannot get into your home at the time you have agreed with your landlord, your right to repair will be cancelled. You will then have to re-apply and start the process again.

Who pays for the repair?

The landlord pays for the repair. If you have told another contractor to carry out the repair, the contractor should send the bill direct to the landlord.

How can I find out more?

Contact your landlord or the Scottish Executive Development Department at:

Housing 2:3
Area 1-G
Victoria Quay
Edinburgh
EH6 6QQ

E.mail: housing.information@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

Phone: 0131 244 2105

Alternative formats and community language versions of this leaflet are available on request from the Scottish Executive, Housing 2:3, Area 1-G, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh EH6 6QQ

Tel: 0131 244 2105. The leaflet can also be viewed on the Scottish Executive website at <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/>