

Repairs and Maintenance Policy		Version: 4	Ref: HM1
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<p>This policy applies to all tenants and residents living in properties managed and owned by New Outlook where New Outlook are responsible for the Repairs & Maintenance of the building.</p> <p>This document applies to the following areas of New Outlook:</p>			
Residential care ✓	Dom Care	Housing ✓	Supported living ✓

POLICY STATEMENT

Repairs and maintenance are one of the most important services offered to the people we support. It is also a key service which they use to judge the overall service delivery of the landlord. A high-quality repairs service is therefore very important to New Outlook in maintaining good relations and reputation with the people we support.

New Outlook’s objective is to deliver a responsive, cost-effective repairs service, sensitive to the needs of the people we support, ensuring that legal and statutory obligations are met.

We aim to:

- Meet all statutory and contractual obligations
- Provide a responsive and effective service
- Ensure that repairs and maintenance are of a high standard and represent good value for money.

This policy applies to all who live in accommodation managed by New Outlook Housing Association.

POLICY PRINCIPLES

As a registered housing provider New Outlook Housing Association is regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing and will meet the requirements of the Home Regulatory Standard applicable to this policy which states:

In relation to the quality of accommodation, the Registered provider shall:

- Ensure that tenants’ homes meet the standard set out in the Government’s Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard
- Meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard
- In agreeing to a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than the standards in the Government’s Decent Homes Guidance.

In relation to repairs and maintenance the registered provider shall:

- provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time
- Meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

New Outlook will undertake maintenance of its properties under one of the following main categories:

1. Responsive repairs
2. Voids Maintenance
3. During defects liability period for new properties
4. Aids and Adaptations
5. Cyclical Maintenance
6. Planned Maintenance/Major Repairs
7. Property Health and Safety Compliance

1. Responsive Repairs

Tenants are required to report repairs as soon as they become aware, or suspect, that a repair is needed. Repairs can be reported by telephone, letter, e-mail, in person or to any colleague. When a repair is reported, the tenant will be given a date by which they should expect the repair to be completed.

When reporting a repair, the following information will be needed:

- Name of the person reporting the repair
- Address where the repair is needed
- Details of the repair; please give as much information as possible
- Location of the repair is, e.g. kitchen
- When access is available
- A contact telephone number

The repair should be logged, and then allocated a category for the repair as below, which provides a target completion date:

1. Make Safe Response within 4 hours from time of report
2. Emergency Repair Response within 24 hours from time of report
3. Urgent Repair Response within 7 days from date of report
4. Routine Repair Response within 28 days from date of report

A works order will be filed with one of our approved contractors who will aim to complete the repair by the target completion date. If a specialist contractor is required, or the work involves obtaining quotes, the repair may take longer. The tenant should be notified of any delays.

Repairs will be logged under different categories as set out in the Repairs and Maintenance Policy depending on the type and nature of the repair. Each category has a different target response time that contractors are expected to achieve.

The aim is for a contractor to visit and repair for the first time. If additional parts are needed or the repair is not as reported a second visit will be arranged.

If there is an emergency outside of normal office hours of 5pm – 9am, e.g. flood or fire, tenants can activate the out of hours monitoring service via the care call if your property has one, otherwise contact New Outlook's on-call manager on 0121 602 6521.

Below are examples of the types of repairs which could fall into each category:

Make safe – within 4 hours of reporting the repair

- Security risk, such as a broken ground floor window or broken front door which cannot be secured
- Gas leaks
- Total electrical failure
- Water leaks that cannot be contained at all

Emergency repairs – within 24 hours of reporting the repair

- Dangerous electrical fittings and partial electrical failure
- Plumbing repairs involving running water that cannot be contained for a long period
- Blocked toilets when there is no other toilet available
- Front door locks, where there is a security risk
- Broken glass, where there is a potential security risk.
- Complete loss of heating (during winter months only)

Urgent repairs – within 7 days of reporting the repair

These are faults that may cause inconvenience to a tenant but have little possibility of causing further property damage.

- Hot water supply and partial central heating problems.
- Damaged roof tiles
- Rotten/damaged flooring
- Leaking overflows
- Blocked external drains

Routine repairs – within 28 days (about 4 weeks) of reporting the repair

All other repairs will fall under this category

2. Voids maintenance

Whenever a property is vacated, we will carry out an inspection promptly to determine what work needs to be undertaken to ensure the property meets our Lettings Standard before reletting. We will ensure all relevant tests are completed to meet safety regulations prior to the property being occupied.

Most repairs will be completed prior to the new occupants moving into their homes. However, to ensure we are able let our properties as quickly as possible, some repairs may be completed after the home has been occupied. We will inform the tenants of all the outstanding works prior to the letting and decide for these to be completed as soon as possible after the tenancy has started.

3. Defects liability period

For newly built buildings, in the first year from the building completion, the repairs and maintenance are managed through the contractors who constructed the building. The terms and conditions of these will be outlined within each building contract. This is known as the Defect Liability period.

All repairs reported during the defect liability period will be referred to the building contractor who will carry out the repairs.

4. Aids and adaptations

Subject to the provision of Government funding to cover all costs, we will support and assist the carrying out of works which will enable independent living and enhance the quality of life of tenants with mobility or other impairments. In doing so we will follow good practice and regulatory guidance in relation to the procurement of works and aim to ensure such adaptations are carried out quickly and competently.

Detailed and accurate records about adapted properties will be kept enabling implementation of appropriate maintenance regimes and to enable informed decisions to be made about their future allocation to other tenants. We will only refuse to carry out adaptation work in exceptional circumstances. This will include when:

- The adaptation is technically difficult to achieve without detriment to the property and other tenants.
- Funding is not available.
- The specific advice from relevant agencies is that the proposed adaptation would not be appropriate.

5. Cyclical Maintenance

This is work that needs to be done on a regular cycle, and includes the following:

- External decorations and any prior to painting repairs to all our properties when required.
- Checking and clearing of gutters, gullies and down pipes.
- Internal decorations of communal areas where they exist in our properties.

New Outlook will arrange external decoration of all properties and redecoration of communal areas as identified during the annual property inspections, or as per lease agreements if applicable.

Cyclical maintenance work may be subject to tender as detailed in New Outlooks Financial Regulations.

6. Planned Maintenance

- New Outlook will maintain, and regularly review, a planned maintenance program that informs investment for the future and the improvement of our properties. This will ensure that we continue to provide good quality housing. To provide evidence for the review, an annual inspection will be carried out of every property that we own and manage. New Outlook has a long-term view of the property components (structure, roof, kitchens, bathrooms, lifts, etc.). Information is kept up to date through commissioning Stock Condition surveys regularly.
- Tenants must provide access to contractors for any planned work scheduled and communicated in advance.

Tenants will be notified of the scheduled work at least five days in advance and are expected to comply with the preparation requirements outlined in the notification.

Planned maintenance identified during inspections will be added to the Asset Management Plan. Works will be put in priority order and matched to available funds. During the annual budget process, Managers and the Executive will review the Asset Management plan to consider new priorities.

The Asset Management Plan is reviewed quarterly by the Executive, Finance, Audit and Development Committee and Board.

7. Health and Safety checks

New Outlook has a statutory obligation to make sure that its properties are safe and of a good standard. This includes regular checks including (but not restricted to):

- Gas safety
- Fire Risk Assessments
- Electrical safety
- Lift safety
- Legionella
- Gas boiler servicing
- Fire Protection
- Health & Safety
- Wind and watertight, including damp and mould

To meet these obligations New Outlook uses qualified contractors and keeps a schedule of dates for when checks are due. Failure by a tenant to allow access to a statutory check is a breach of their tenancy agreement and legal action can be taken to terminate the tenancy.

Rechargeable repairs

Rechargeable repairs occur where there is a need to carry out a repair and it is reasonable to conclude that the repair is the tenant's responsibility. This includes repairs required after a tenancy ends.

Examples of circumstances where New Outlook will recharge tenants for the full costs associated with a repair include:

- Willful damage, Vandalism, negligence, destructive actions by the tenant or visitor to the property
- Forced entry is required owing to lost keys
- The out of office hours emergency call-out system being misused
- No access to specifically arranged appointment or emergency call out

The Rechargeable Repairs Policy gives further details of the procedure to apply in these circumstances.

Inspection programs

We will carry out annual inspections of our properties to check the condition of the properties and to help plan for future programs of works.

In addition, completed repairs will be inspected on the following basis:

- Value - all repairs over £500.
- Tenant complaints - monitoring complaints of quality of workmanship, attitude of contractor, cleaning up after work done.

New Outlook aims to assess at least 10% of all jobs carried out.

Customer Alterations

Tenants wishing to carry out any alterations or improvements to their home must apply in writing to the Association and receive our written permission prior to any works being undertaken. This will include (but is not an exhaustive list) alterations and improvements to:

- Improve or enlarge the property, fittings or fixtures (e.g. removing an internal wall, loft renovations, replacement of doors)
- Add new fixtures or fittings (e.g. kitchen, bathroom, shower, double glazing or any kind of external aerial or satellite dish)
- Put up a shed, garage or other structure.
- Laying of a patio or other alterations in garden areas

We will respond to any written request to alter or improve the property within 28 days. We will not unreasonably withhold our consent, but we will have regard for any adverse effect the alteration or improvement might have on the property, to other properties or residents.

Consent may be conditional. At all times we must consider factors such as health and safety issues, the long-term structure of our properties, the standard of workmanship, the possible effect on other properties or tenants, etc. and therefore conditions attached to consent will be strictly enforced.

The cost of repairing damage because of any alterations or improvements carried out, or any costs incurred by the Association to rectify will be met in full by the tenant. Tenants have a right to compensation at the end of their tenancy for certain improvements carried out with written permission.

Tenant feedback

The Tenant or scheme manager will be provided with a job completion/satisfaction slip after each repair, giving the tenant the opportunity to provide feedback. The tenant or schememanager should review the work to confirm that the job has been completed.

Any issues with a repair, or the conduct of contractors, should be reported to Housing Management as soon as possible.

Monitoring and reporting of performance

We will record and monitor a range of financial and performance indicators to assess and improve the repairs service's performance. Targets will be reviewed at least annually to drive up overall performance standards. Key performance information will be reported to the Scrutiny Committee and our Board and made available to tenants via our newsletters and website.

Approved contractor list

New Outlook maintains an approved contractor list which is reviewed and approved annually by the Board. Only approved contractors should be used unless there are valid reasons for using another contractor. In these circumstances their use should be approved by the Executive.

Applications for inclusion on the approved contractor list are made by the Housing Management team. The list is reviewed regularly and updated to make sure that all contractors have public and employer liability insurance, and a regularly reviewed Health & Safety policy.

All contractors must comply with the Code of Conduct for Contractors which includes:

- That all their workers carry identity cards
- That all their workers observe health & safety procedures
- Care is taken to look after the tenant's possessions.
- Properties are left in a safe and clean condition.

Where possible New Outlook will include tenants in choosing and reviewing contractors.

RELATED POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The following are additional policies and procedures, related to the delivery of Repairs & Maintenance:

- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- Contractor Code of Conduct
- Aids & Adaptation Policy

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

ROLE	RESPONSIBILITY
CEO & Board	Strategic
Director of Operations	Operational
All colleagues	Have a responsibility to act in the best interests of the tenant and New Outlook to ensure properties are kept in a good state of repair.