

Cheshire West and Chester Council
Housing Management

Responsive Repairs Policy (Inc Right to Repair)

1 MANAGEMENT INFORMATION

Approval Date	28 July 2022
Next Review Date	27 July 2024
Responsible Service Area	Strategic Housing and Commissioning
Responsible Director	Gemma Davies, Director Economy, Housing & Policy

Aim of Policy

This policy applies to all housing management services delivered on behalf of Cheshire West and Chester (CW&C) Council.

This Policy sets out our approach to responsive repairs. The implementation of this Policy will ensure we deliver an effective and efficient repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas whilst maintaining value for money. It also responds to the needs of tenants, with the objective of completing repairs right the first time.

Policy

This policy applies to all Cheshire West and Chester housing properties and communal areas managed by ForHousing and any other subsequent services commissioned to ForHousing by Cheshire West and Chester council via contract variations/change notes.

We repair and/or replace small to medium components on failure due to wear and tear or tenant misuse. To ensure components are not prematurely replaced, regular cycles for the servicing of equipment, inspection and testing required by regulations will be carried out to the decent homes standard.

Emergency repairs can be reported 24 hours per day, seven days a week. Outside of normal working hours the service will as a minimum make the property safe and secure. You can report repairs via our website webchat feature to get an instant response, via our service centre, email and through the tenant app. Outside of office hours always call 0300 123 55 22 and you will automatically be connected to our out of hours service.

We will endeavour to ensure that responsive repairs are completed in one visit, 'right first time' and arrange appointments at the first point of reporting, for all non- emergency internal and external repairs. Repair requests will be confirmed by phone, in writing or in a text message to the tenant. This will include a description of the repair, the date and time of appointment and the name of the contractor.

Responsive repairs will be responded to according to their level of priority, such as whether

they are an emergency, urgent or routine. Where circumstances are appropriate or necessary, such as a tenant with support needs, a repair may be escalated to a higher priority.

If a repair cannot be completed within the stated timescale, if materials have to be specially ordered or large-scale works are required, the contractor will inform the tenant of the revised timescale which will be completed as batch works. Due to the nature of these works, they could be progressed as investment works outside of this Policy.

Repairs timescales are:

- **Emergency repairs:** within 24 hours or one working day
- **Urgent repairs:** within 7 working days
- **Routine repairs:** within 20 working days
- **Batched repairs:** as part of our capital investment programme or within 100 working days

Right to repair

Certain repairs fall under the right to repair scheme, the following timescales apply for these as listed below. Where circumstances are appropriate or necessary, such as a tenant with support needs, a repair may be escalated to a higher priority:

Emergency repairs:

- Total loss of electric power
- Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting
- Total loss of water supply
- Total or partial loss of gas supply
- Blocked flue to open fire or boiler
- Heating or hot water not working between 31st October and 1st May
- Blocked/leaking foul drain or soil stack
- Toilet not flushing (if there is only one toilet in the property)
- Leak from water pipe, tank or cistern
- Insecure external window, door or lock
- Tap cannot be turned

Urgent repairs:

- Partial loss of electrical power
- Partial loss of water supply
- Heating or hot water not working between 1st May and 31st October
- Blocked sink, bath or basin
- Leaking roof
- Rotten timber flooring or stair tread
- Door entry phone not working
- Extractor fan not working

Tenants Responsibility

We will publicise repairs and maintenance which are the tenant's responsibility. Where it is identified that tenants have caused damage to the property or undertaken unauthorised alterations, we will proactively seek to recover the costs incurred from tenants to rectify the damage and/or issues identified. We understand that tenants are unable to carry out works and we are flexible, where we are advised a tenant is unable to carry out these repairs, this will be reviewed on an individual basis. Works that are tenant responsibility are updated on our website but include:

- Toilet seats
- Batons to fix curtain rails
- Curtain rails
- Repairs to domestic appliances such as washing machines
- Bath panels
- Sink, basin or bath plugs
- Chips to baths or wash hand basins
- Unblocking of external gullies (except communal)
- Work due to lost keys such as lock changes
- Repairs to internal doors and doorframes
- Skirting boards/tiles
- External meter cupboards
- Floor and wall tiles
- Replacement of electrical fuses
- Current tenants home improvements
- Gates or fences unless communal areas or H&S risk to the occupants
- Paths except those to main entrances or required to access bin areas
- Removal of mould from walls and ceilings due to condensation.
- Fixtures and fittings installed by the current tenant
- Decoration, including hairline cracks

Where a non-emergency repair has been requested and it is evident that this is due to tenant damage, work will not be carried out unless the tenant pays for the full cost of the works in advance of the works being carried out in line with our rechargeable repairs policy. Affordable payment plans are available to assist tenants in financial hardship.

Where it is established that materials or parts have been ordered for works which is of a specialist nature and the tenant fails to allow access to undertake the work, we will proactively seek to recover the costs incurred from the tenant.

How the Policy will be delivered

The delivery of this policy and associated procedures will be the responsibility of ForHousing. This Policy will be available to all employees through the intranet and regular training will be provided to relevant employees on all policies and procedures.

If staff become aware that there are problems with effective operation of the policy or the associated procedures, they should report this to the policy owner. This feedback will be incorporated into the policy / procedural review process.

Related Documents

- ForHousing Responsive Repairs & Maintenance Procedure (HMC)
- Asbestos Policy
- Electrical Safety Policy
- Fire Policy
- Gas Policy
- Health & Safety Policy
- Legionella Policy
- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Redress Policy
- CW&C Tenancy Agreements
- CW&C Leases

Equality Analysis

Date of approved EA	
Results of EA / Actions taken	

forward to mitigate any potential negative impacts

Consultation & Business Intelligence

The Policy was reviewed in consultation with tenants and staff representing Cheshire West and Chester Council and ForHousing.

Monitoring Arrangements

Delivery of responsive repair services will be measured using existing methods including continued monitoring of:

- Satisfaction with services
- Redress levels and satisfaction with resolution
- Performance and Service Standard levels
- Post inspections

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Control Data & Approval History

Policy owner:	CW&C: Alison Amesbury, Strategic Housing & Commissioning Senior Manager
Next review date:	27 July 2024

Issue	Approved by	Date
V1	Cabinet Member for Housing	28 July 2022

Document Revision History

Date amended	Version number	Key changes
	1	Original version
	1.2	Revision following tenant feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added in cycling for servicing would be to the decent homes standard.• Expanded the ways tenants can contact us.• Added where circumstances are appropriate or necessary, such as a tenant with support needs, a repair may be escalated to a higher priority.• Added relevant documents in the 'Related documents Section' to be clearer on tenants responsibilities and regulatory compliance .