

# **RAILWAY HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE**

#### **1. Statement of Intent**

The Association aims to provide safe, comfortable homes that are well maintained. This means keeping the structure of its properties in good repair, and keeping in good working order the installations for heating, sanitation, and supply of water, gas and electricity.

The Association aims to provide a high quality repairs and maintenance service that represents good value for money, is sensitive to the needs of the individual, efficient, responsive, flexible, accountable, and meets the expectations of our residents.

In order to achieve these aims the Association will:-

- Aim to accurately diagnose repairs at the first point of contact.
- Where possible arrange to carry out repair work at a time to suit the resident.
- Carry out repairs within best practice response timescales.
- Where possible ensure all repairs are completed on the first visit.
- Set a high standard of workmanship for our contractors.
- Listen to any concerns that residents have about repairs.
- Keep expenditure within the Association's repairs and maintenance budget.
- Consider the environmental impact of building products.

#### **2. Implementation**

##### **2.1 Repairing Obligations**

The Association's repair duties are set out in Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and are incorporated into the terms and conditions of tenancy: -

- Keep in repair the structure and exterior of the property and installations provided by the Association for heating, hot water, sanitation and supply of water, gas and electricity.
- Decorate the exterior of the property when the Association deems it necessary, unless with the written permission of the Association the resident wishes to carry out the decoration.

There are some repairs that are the responsibility of the resident. These are generally minor tasks and a list of these is included in the 'Residents Handbook' (section 5 – 5.1 to 5.2).

##### **2.2 Reporting Repairs**

Repairs may be reported in any of the following ways:-

- In person at Bank Top House
- By telephone (free phone 0800 0287428)
- In writing
- By fax
- To a member of staff
- For emergency repairs out of office hours via community alarm services or by telephone (01429 298988)

## **2.2 Reporting Repairs**

A written confirmation will be sent to the resident within 3 working days of a repair being ordered. This confirmation will include a brief summary of the repair, an individual job / reference number and a 'customer satisfaction' slip. Confirmation will be sent even though emergency repairs may have already been completed so that residents can report their satisfaction with the work carried out.

## **2.3 Rechargeable Repairs**

The cost of any repair not caused by fair wear and tear may be recharged to the resident. Each case will be considered on its individual circumstances and in accordance with the 'Rechargeable Repairs' policy.

## **2.4 Timescales for Carrying Out Repairs**

The Association will: -

- Attend and make safe an emergency repair within 24 hours of the repair being reported to us. Emergency repairs are those that are needed to avoid serious health and safety risks, serious structural damage or to ensure a home is secure. Repairs that may be needed after an emergency has been made safe will be carried out within one of the timescales shown below. This emergency service will be available 24 hours a day throughout the year.
- Carry out urgent repairs (1) within 3 working days of the repair being reported to us. Urgent repairs are those that if not repaired will cause substantial discomfort to the resident and/or potential damage to the property.
- Carry out urgent repairs (2) within 7 working days of the repair being reported to us.
- Carry out routine repairs within 31 days of the repair being reported to us. If a pre-work inspection is required then this will be carried out within 10 working days. Routine repairs are those that cause minor inconvenience and have little effect on the property if not undertaken more quickly.

Further information, including examples of repairs in each timescale category, is included in the Resident's Handbook (Section 5).

If a repair cannot be completed within the stated timescale (for example, if spare parts have to be ordered) then the Association will endeavour to inform the resident of the revised timescale for completion of the work. If a heating supply cannot be restored then the contractor will offer an alternative means of temporary heating and advise the resident of the estimated time for completion of the repair.

The Association will try to ensure that repairs are completed in one visit. Where reasonably practicable, approval will be given for additional works if the contractor is on site, the work is not of a major nature and the work requested does not require a pre-work inspection.

Targets will be set for achieving completion of repairs within the above timescales. Performance against these targets will be reported to the Board and publicised in the Residents' newsletter.

### **2.5 Appointments**

The Association will arrange to carry out pre and post-work inspections of internal repairs at a time that is convenient for the resident. Residents may also request an appointment for the pre and post-work inspection of external repairs.

Contractors will be asked to contact residents to arrange access to carry out repairs work.

In exceptional circumstances the Association' staff and contractors will carry out inspections and repair works outside of normal office hours at the request of the resident.

### **2.6 Pre-Work Inspections**

Pre-work inspections will not usually be carried out for emergency repairs except where the resident is unable to fully explain the problem or the repair is of a structural nature.

For any other repairs pre-work inspections will be carried out where –

- The resident is unable to fully explain the problem
- The repair may be the resident's responsibility
- Surveying measurements, schedules and specification of work are needed before the repair work can be ordered
- Previous repairs have not resolved the problem

The timescales for pre-work inspections will be –

- Emergency repairs within 24 hours of the repair being reported to us
- Urgent repairs within 3 working days of the repair being reported to us
- Routine repairs within 10 working days of the repair being reported to us

### **2.7 Post-Work Inspections**

The Association will check on the quality of repairs by carrying out post-work inspections at random on 12% of completed repairs. These quality control checks will include different types of repairs, properties and geographical areas. All repairs costing more than £500 will be post-work inspected.

Post work inspections will also be carried out when a resident is dissatisfied because the repair has not rectified the problem and/or the quality of the workmanship was not acceptable.

### **2.8 Customer Satisfaction**

Resident's satisfaction levels with the repairs and maintenance service will be continually monitored using customer satisfaction questionnaires to ensure that the expectations of our residents are met. When a repair is reported a customer satisfaction survey form will be sent to the resident with a free postal return.

All satisfaction survey forms that are returned to the Association will be monitored. If a resident notes any dissatisfaction with the service then the Association will contact the resident and ensure that –

- The reason for dissatisfaction is investigated
- The cause is remedied wherever possible, with the minimum disruption to the resident
- The resident is advised of the action taken

The results of the customer satisfaction surveys on the repairs and maintenance service will be used to monitor performance and reported to the Board.

## **2.9 Customer Care**

When visiting resident's homes staff will carry and display identification.

For residents who are visually impaired or otherwise vulnerable, staff and contractors will on request use a pre-agreed code word to confirm their identification.

In accordance with the Association's commitment to providing a service that is sensitive to individual's needs, we will offer to undertake repairs more quickly in special circumstances such as –

- Where repairs affect the resident's sense of security
- Where a home is without heating or hot water during winter months
- Where repairs affect the resident's mobility
- Where repairs affect the health and safety of young children

The 'Racial Harassment', 'Harassment', 'Domestic Violence' and 'Anti Social Behaviour' policies state the Association's commitment to carry out specific repairs to reduce the effects for residents suffering harassment and anti social behaviour. In exceptional circumstances where persistent damage occurs the Association may decide to carry out the minimum level of repairs required under Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 only until the problems are resolved.

The 'Disabled Adaptations' policy details the Association's commitment to the provision of adaptations in order to restore or enable independent living, privacy, confidence and dignity for individuals and their families. The Association will meet individual needs by providing adaptations that are delivered sensitively, fit for the purpose and within a specified timescale.

The Association will try to meet any reasonable culturally sensitive requests from residents using our repairs and maintenance service.

## **2.10 Gas Safety**

In accordance with our 'Gas Safety' policy the Association will take all reasonable steps to ensure that all gas heating appliances installed and maintained by the Association are checked annually for safe operation and compliance with current gas safety regulations. This work will be programmed throughout the year and will be carried out by fully qualified gas service engineers.

## **2.11 Planned Maintenance & Improvements**

Planned maintenance includes the replacement of major items such as windows, doors and central heating boilers as well as external works such as repairing render, walls, fencing and paths. Work of this nature will be grouped together and usually carried out to properties on a whole site, scheme or geographical location. Planned maintenance work will be identified using information gathered by our Maintenance Inspectors and from 'Stock Condition' surveys, which will be carried out every three years. Work will be prioritised according to its urgency.

Our five year planned maintenance programme will be updated annually as work is completed and up to date information on our properties is gathered and analysed. The purpose of the plan is to meet our responsibilities as a landlord to provide safe homes in good condition, reduce the need to carry out responsive repairs and meet resident's aspirations.

Residents will be consulted before planned maintenance work is carried out to their home. We will listen to resident's views and try to tailor the programme to best suit resident's needs. Where applicable and practical, a choice of colour and design will be offered to residents.

### **2.11 Planned Maintenance & Improvements**

A post planned maintenance work satisfaction survey will be carried out to gauge resident's satisfaction levels. Any dissatisfaction will be investigated and the cause remedied wherever possible. The results of the surveys will also be used to monitor the performance of our contractors and improve our planned maintenance service.

### **2.12 Cyclical Maintenance**

The Association will: -

- Re-paint the outside of each property, and the inside of communal areas (if necessary) every five years.
- Carry out annual servicing of mains wired smoke alarms, stair lifts, warden call equipment, emergency generators, storm pumps, emergency lighting, fire fighting equipment and passenger lifts.

### **2.13 Major Works**

Major works are those that require a significant amount of work that may mean that residents have to move out of their home on a temporary or permanent basis. These works may include demolition, redevelopment, repairing structural damage such as replacing concrete floors, repairing subsidence or rising damp. Residents will be offered alternative accommodation and compensation as applicable and in accordance with our 'Alternative Accommodation' and 'Compensation' policies.

### **2.14 Vacant Properties**

The Association will ensure that vacant properties are repaired in accordance with the 'Lettable Standard' policy prior to being re-let.

### **2.15 Contractors Performance**

The Association will carry out an annual review of each contractor's performance to ensure that the quality of workmanship and response times meet the standards expected. The results of the annual review will be reported to the Board.

### **2.16 Asbestos**

In accordance with the 'Asbestos Management' policy the Association will maintain an up to date record of the location and condition of any asbestos identified in our properties. Information on the location and condition of the asbestos will be provided to any contractor who is liable to work on or disturb it.

### **2.16 Complaints**

Residents have the right to complain about the repairs and maintenance service. A complaint can be made through the Association's complaints procedure. However, requests for the Association to carry out repairs that are the resident's responsibility or requests to re-schedule repair response times will not usually be considered as complaints.

## **3. Responsibility**

The Director of Asset Management is responsible for the effective implementation of this policy.

## **4. Review**

This policy will be reviewed biennially, in consultation with residents.

This policy applies to the beneficiaries of Joseph Hornby Stockdale Almshouses.

**February 2008**

**This policy can be made available on request in other languages, large type, Braille or in audio format.**