

York Housing Association

MAINTENANCE POLICY

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Code:

Associated documents:

Adaptations Policy
Asbestos Policy and Management Plan
Building Works and Maintenance Procurement Procedure
Cyclical Maintenance Policy
Gas Policy
Lettable Standard
Procedure for adding properties onto the gas register
Procedure for carrying out Playground Inspections
Tenant Recharge Policy
Tenants' Own Improvements Policy

YORK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

MAINTENANCE POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

York Housing Association (YHA) is committed to providing a high quality repairs and maintenance service that is flexible, responsive and customer driven. Wherever possible we want to ensure that routine repairs are completed on the first visit.

We will ensure that we meet all legal and regulatory requirements and we learn from innovation and best practice. We will ensure that all staff and contractors work in a way that enables us to meet this objective.

As a landlord we also have a responsibility to protect the value of our assets and obtain value for money.

We will achieve this by:

- Accurately diagnosing repairs when they are first reported.
- Meeting or exceeding best practice response timescales.
- Where possible, ensuring all repairs are completed in one visit.
- Where possible, carrying out the repair at a time to suit the tenant
- Ensuring value for money for the Association and our tenants
- Providing a service that is efficient, flexible and responsive to the needs of our diverse range of tenants.
- Setting high standards for our contractors and monitoring their performance against these standards.
- Listening to feedback from our tenants and using this to improve service delivery.
- Maintaining and monitoring a list of approved contractors who comply with our standards of quality, value for money and demonstrate a proper attitude towards working with us and with our tenants
- Keeping expenditure within budget.
- Considering the environmental impact of building products and our practices.
- Adopting competitive procurement procedures which ensure value for money.

LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

In carrying out our landlord function in the repair and maintenance of our properties we will comply with all relevant legislation, which may include the following:

Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

Housing Act 1985

Environmental Protection Act 1990

Equality Act 2010

Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998

Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

Housing Grants Construction and Regeneration Act 1994
Building Regulations Act 1984
The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007
Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2012
Housing Health and Safety Rating System

This list is not exhaustive.

In addition to regulations affecting specific items of work and working practice we will comply with the requirements of external bodies which have a statutory role in the regulation of Housing Associations, e.g. The Homes and Communities Agency. It is our objective to comply with best practice in all aspects of our maintenance work.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

York Housing Association is committed to ensuring and promoting Equality and Diversity. We are opposed to unfair discrimination on any grounds.

When providing a maintenance service to tenants we will ensure that we take account of any particular vulnerability or cultural or religious issues which requires an adjustment to our standard repairs service. We will collect information about vulnerability and store it on our IT repairs system. This information will be communicated to contractors to ensure that we can provide a service which is tailored to the needs of individuals. However, no vulnerability information will be provided to a third party without the express consent of the tenant.

In all our services we wish to have a workforce which reflects the local communities in which we work. We will therefore seek to encourage recruitment, retention and career development from as diverse a range of people as possible.

The Association has an approved list of suppliers and contractors. Demonstration of a commitment to equality and diversity is part of the selection process. Our contractor code of conduct includes our Equality and Diversity Statement and Procedure which contractors are asked to sign up to and comply with. We are committed to promoting equality and diversity objectives to suppliers and contractors we expect our contractors to have in place their own Equality and Diversity Policies and to offer their staff regular training. We recognise that some of our contractors are small companies who may need support and we will therefore ensure that we provide E&D training on an annual basis to these contractors.

We review our list of approved contractors on an annual basis and will endeavour to ensure increasing diversity reflecting the communities in which we work.

HEALTH & SAFETY

The Health and Safety of the Association's tenants, staff, and of those carrying out maintenance or building work on our behalf is of prime importance. When carrying out such work, the Association and its staff will comply with all relevant regulations and we will seek to ensure the safety of our staff, tenants, general public and contractors, as set out in the Health & Safety Policy. Whenever contracts for works fall within the scope

of the Construction (Design and Management) regulations we will ensure those regulations are adhered to.

All works to gas or electrical installations and appliances will only be carried out by qualified and registered engineers

ENVIRONMENT

We recognise our responsibility to the environment and the need to act to minimise any adverse effect of our activities upon it. Our Sustainability Policy includes a commitment to minimise the use of non-sustainable products, to enhance the sustainability of our housing stock and to increase the environmental awareness of those with whom we come into contact. This will be reflected in our decisions on appropriate works, procurement, and materials in the context of our maintenance policy.

RESPONSIVE DAY TO DAY REPAIRS

The most important service which we provide to our tenants is the day to day repairs service. In providing this service we aim to continually exceed the standards of service and tenant satisfaction set by our regulators, providing a first class repairs service.

We aim to ensure that all repairs are carried out using the principle of 'Right first Time' and we monitor contractor performance and benchmark against this PI, The principle of 'Right first time' is;

Repair Completed at the First Visit: The repair should be completed by the operative without the need to return a second time because the repair was inaccurately diagnosed and / or the operative did not fix the problem, A repair is considered fixed at first visit when the operative has attended the property, identified, diagnosed and remedied the fault (using van stock), and carried out any making good before then leaving the property.

Multiple trades: Where the job requires multiple trades who may follow on from each other, then the work would still be considered completed at first visit unless the customer had to call the operative back because the repair had not been completed correctly and required a rectification visit.

Replacement parts: If the job required specific replacement parts and the operative needed to return a second time with the correct parts because they were not part of his/her van stock, then this would not count as completed at first visit.

No access: Where the operative is unable to gain access to the property, this will not be counted as a visit and should be excluded from the figures.

We enable any type of repair to be reported during office hours. We also provide an emergency repairs service out of office hours. We will ensure that repairs are dealt with in accordance with a clear allocation of priorities, categorising repairs as:

Emergency, which will be carried out within 24 hours,
Urgent which will be carried out within 5 days,

Essential which will be carried out within 14 days
Routine which will be carried out within 30 days.

Full details of the service are provided to tenants at tenancy sign up and on request at any other time.

PLANNED INVESTMENT

YHA sees the identification and carrying out of planned investment work as an integral part of its Asset Management Strategy. A programme of major repairs is essential for maintaining our housing stock in habitable condition and to a standard exceeding that of Decent Homes Standard. Planned investments comprise the complete renewal of elements of the building structure and internal fittings. (See Appendix 1 for definition). We will continue to carry out a rolling Stock Condition Survey, aiming to survey each of our properties once every five years in order to inform the Major Repairs programme, which consists of a detailed 5 year plan within a broader 30 year plan.

We will consult with tenants through the Customer Panel and other annual consultation exercises to ensure tenant input is taken into account when prioritising works. We also carry out detailed consultation with tenants prior to commencement of works. Wherever possible, we will offer tenants' choice in materials, finishes and room layout. An example of the information provided to tenants in advance of a Planned Investment programme is attached as Appendix 2.

CONTRACTORS

In our engagement and use of contractors we aim to provide an excellent repair and maintenance service to tenants, achieving value for money, a high quality of work, and high levels of tenant satisfaction.

We keep a list of approved contractors for all building and maintenance work carried out on our behalf. In an effort to support the local economy we aim to use locally based contractors and local labour wherever possible. We will also support initiatives aimed at increasing diversity in the workforce, such as apprenticeship schemes or specifically targeting adverts at under represented groups.

We will source and appoint contractors in accordance with the Building Works and Maintenance Procurement Procedure (See Appendix 3). This specifies the documentation to be provided, a procedure for interview, the approval process and how the list is maintained. Contractors will also be asked to sign up to a Code of Conduct which sets out how they should conduct themselves in tenant's homes. The Operations Director and the Development and Property Director have joint responsibility for maintaining the list and have authority to add, remove or suspend contractors from the list.

We will continually monitor the performance of our contractors and the spread of work across our contractors by using a contractor performance matrix. Please see a blank template to facilitate this monitoring process in appendix 4. Any contractor who fails to meet our standards will be asked to attend a meeting with a member of each of the Property and Operations team to discuss the reasons for poor performance. If, after a

reasonable period of time, they fail to make the necessary improvements then they will be removed from the Approved List.

We will give an annual report on the approved list, including additions and deletions to the list, and contractor performance to the Board of the Association.

IN-HOUSE MAINTENANCE SERVICE

YHA employs staff to carry out minor repairs, void works caretaking and cleaning and gardening as necessary. It is our policy to use the in-house service for these types of jobs, subject to capacity and the types of work which operatives have been trained to undertake.

As well as utilising our in-house maintenance service to carry out repairs, we will also offer every new tenant up to 2 hours of Property Maintenance Worker time to carry out minor tasks associated with moving into a new home (for instance putting up curtain rails and shelves and removal and disposal of storage boxes).

THE RIGHT TO REPAIR

Although the Right to Repair is no longer a regulatory requirement, YHA continues to follow the guidelines of the Right to Repair scheme as previously set out by the Housing Corporation.

Details of the Right to Repair Scheme are set out in a separate leaflet for tenants in summary; tenants have the right to expect certain repairs to be done within a set time. These are repairs that could endanger the health, safety or security of tenants or their household if we do not do them within a set time, or repairs that would cost us less than £250 to carry out. The scheme provides for us to pay compensation to tenants following their recourse to the right to repair in accordance with the procedure in the Tenants' Handbook.

TENANTS' RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REPAIR

Tenants are responsible for carrying out some minor repairs. We list these in the Tenancy Agreement and a Repairs Leaflet for tenants our staff are available to offer advice on repairs that are the tenant's responsibility.

We make a tenant repairs responsibility available to all tenants and this can also be viewed on our website. We also give each tenant a Handy Hints Book which provides useful information on how to carry out these types of repairs.

Where a tenant is vulnerable because of issues such as ill health, disability or age then we will provide further assistance. This could be by signposting to handyperson services or by carrying out the repair ourselves. If we carry out the repair ourselves then we may recharge the tenant for this. Any decision to recharge will take account of the tenant's ability to pay.

RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

It is YHA's policy not to carry out repairs that are the tenant's responsibility, unless the tenant is particularly vulnerable and has no other means of getting the work done.

However, there may be occasions when it is necessary to carry out a repair of this type, for instance to protect the fabric of the building or the health and safety of others, and when this happens we will attempt to recover the cost of the work from the tenant.

Our Policy on Tenant Recharges is attached as Appendix 5.

TENANTS' OWN IMPROVEMENTS

YHA is responsible for the upkeep and replacement of fixtures and fittings within our properties. However there are occasions when a tenant may wish to carry out their own improvements, for example by installing a shower, replacing a bathroom suite, or changing kitchen units. We expect tenants to request our written approval for such improvements and to comply with our requirements, and we will not unreasonably withhold such approval.

The procedure for approval of Tenants' Improvements is attached as an Appendix 6.

ASBESTOS

It is essential that the risks associated with the presence of asbestos in properties are identified and managed, to protect anyone working on our properties, and our tenants. In accordance with the Association's "Asbestos Policy and Management Plan" (Appendix) we maintain an up to date record of the location and condition of any asbestos identified in our properties and will comply with legislation governing the requirements for gathering such information.

PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS

YHA is required to ensure the health and safety of users of its playground equipment and surrounding area. Regular inspections will be undertaken and any works required to maintain the equipment and area will be carried out as a priority. The procedure for carrying out playground inspections is attached as Appendix 8.

AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS

YHA recognises that tenants' circumstances may change due to a disability, illness, or increasing age, which could have a profound effect on their ability to maintain their independence in their home.

We will respond actively to any request for adaptations or aids which will allow tenants to continue to be able to live in their home, working with the local authority or other statutory and voluntary agencies as appropriate. We will proactively advertise our adaptations service to ensure that tenants are regularly reminded of its existence. See Appendix 9 for the Aids and Adaptations Policy.

CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE

We are committed to maintaining the exterior of our properties to a good standard. Our cyclical maintenance policy provides for regular painting of external painted areas and in some cases communal internal areas at regular intervals. High performance coatings

will be used for protection against corrosion and decay. Wherever possible tenants will be offered a choice of colours. The Cyclical Maintenance Policy is attached as Appendix 10.

ELECTRICAL APPLIANCES AND INSTALLATIONS

The Association requires that all electrical contractors working on our behalf comply with all legislation and codes of practice pertaining to the work and will only use electrical contractors who are registered members of NICEIC, ECA or other recognised bodies.

We will carry out appropriate electrical inspections where work has been carried out to existing installations and Periodic Electrical Inspections to electrical installations where previous inspections recommend a re-inspection interval. See Appendix 12 for a list of these circumstances. We will carry out a visual electrical inspection on all voids or a full Periodic Inspection where appropriate

We will action all works which are deemed necessary on the grounds of health and safety arising from such inspections or tests.

FIRE MAINTENANCE

YHA has a variety of Fire Detection and equipment fitted to our properties. To ensure the installation and maintenance comply with the Regulatory Reform Order and British Standards, YHA undertakes regular tests as per our fire risk assessment process and regular inspections and testing to all installations by suitably qualified engineers to meet the requirements of the legislation and needs of the individual schemes.

Fire Risk Assessments are undertaken to shared accommodation, agency managed schemes and communal areas as required under the Fire Regulatory Reform Order and to British Standard PAS 79 documentation.

LEGIONELLA (LEGIONNAIRE'S DISEASE)

We carry out a risk assessment of all properties and undertake legionella testing where potential risks are identified.

PORTABLE APPLIANCE TESTING (PAT)

As a responsible Landlord, York Housing Association will ensure that any portable electrical appliance that we supply for our properties and offices are tested on a regular basis.

Although the Approved Code of Practice guidelines state a recommended timescale of up to 5 years for every electrical item supplied by us which has a plug be tested, we will carry out Portable Appliance Testing every two years. Any appliance failing the test will be replaced or repaired. We do not accept responsibility to carry out a Portable Appliance Test on any electrical equipment provided by tenants.

TV AERIALS

YHA provides communal aerials at a number of schemes and some aerials to individual properties. The cost of ongoing maintenance and replacement is recouped through service charges. We understand the importance of ensuring that TV aerials remain in good working order and will aim to ensure that any repairs are carried out within 24 hours of a fault being reported.

CCTV

YHA provides CCTV coverage to a number of its schemes to ensure the safety of tenants and the detection of crime. The images will be made available for police investigations upon request.

OTHER SERVICE CONTRACTS

Lightning Protection

YHA's larger schemes have lightning protection and are subject to a 12 month inspection and service agreement to ensure compliance with relevant British Standards

Air Source Heat Pumps

There are a limited number fitted to YHA properties and are subject to 12 monthly visual inspection and check of the hot water system

Catering Equipment

YHA have responsibility for the catering equipment at our Extra Care Scheme. The equipment is subject to annual gas & electrical tests.

Solar Panels

YHA has panels installed on a number of its newer schemes and they are subject to an annual inspection to ensure coolant levels are adequate and a visual check of the panels and fittings.

PASSENGER LIFTS

Where there are lifts or stair-lifts in our properties the Association will engage specialist contractors to carry out regular maintenance and servicing, complying with industry standards and legislation.

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

The maintenance of communal gardens and courtyards is the responsibility of YHA these will be maintained on contract by a gardening contractor from our approved list of contractors. However, should a group of tenants decide that they would like to take on responsibility for their communal gardens or courtyards then we would be happy to agree to this request, providing the upkeep is carried out to a good standard.

Where there are trees on association land, we will have these surveyed at least every three years to take advice on the condition and any works required.. We will programme any works identified for action, taking into account the requirements of any

Tree Preservation Orders in force. We will take into account the impact of our actions upon the local environment and the wider neighbourhood.

Private enclosed gardens attached to a property are the responsibility of the tenant of that property to maintain.

MAINTENANCE OF GAS APPLIANCES

Legislation makes it mandatory that all gas appliances provided by a landlord and any pipe work connecting to the gas supply are safety checked at least once every year. In addition to the mandatory safety checks an annual service is carried out to maintain the appliances in good working order.

We carry out our landlord's gas safety responsibilities in accordance with the Gas Safety in Use Regulations. A copy of the gas policy and procedures are attached as appendix 12.

LETTABLE STANDARD

~~We recognise the importance of providing a good quality, safe and comfortable home~~ for our tenants. In consultation with tenants we have produced a minimum standard for re-lets and this sets out a number of criteria, including condition of kitchens and bathrooms, quality of decorations and affordability of heating. The Lettable Standard is set out in appendix 13.

TENANT INVOLVEMENT AND FEEDBACK

We want tenants to have full involvement in the delivery of our maintenance service and will provide a variety of opportunities for involvement, these are likely to include;

- Involvement in procuring contractors – by taking part in contractor interviews
- Involvement in the procurement of contracts – by being members of selection panels
- Contribution to contractor monitoring – through satisfaction surveys, Customer Panel and ad hoc surveys/focus groups
- Involvement in setting priorities – through involvement in the planned investment programme
- Review of Maintenance Policies
- Tenant Void Inspectors
- Tenant Estate Inspectors

Tenants are given the opportunity to provide feedback to the Association following every item of work done to their home. The Association will monitor such feedback and take action where tenants raise matters of concern. The Association will ensure that feedback is sought in a variety of ways and that assistance in giving feedback is provided for vulnerable tenants.

TENANT CASHBACK FOR REPAIRS

We have carried out consultation with tenants, through the customer panel, and have received a clear message that tenants do not want YHA to implement a tenant cashback for repairs scheme. We will keep this issue under review both in regard to our own tenants' views and what is happening more widely in the sector.

DEFINITION OF ASSET MANAGEMENT/PLANNED INVESTMENT

Asset Management is 'the activity that ensures that the land and buildings asset base of an organisation is optimally structured in the best corporate interest of the organisation concerned.' (Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors).

Asset management covers the range of activities YHA undertakes to ensure that all land and property assets are geared to meet the current and future community, business & regulatory requirements. The term 'asset' includes all the land & property owned by YHA, such as: homes, garages, gardens, amenity spaces and offices.

Asset Management is also about making our stock portfolio responsive to our policy decisions about service delivery, procedures and standards, etc.

This Asset Management Strategy should therefore aim to ensure that the Association's homes continue to meet the needs of residents, both in the present and future, thereby increasing customer satisfaction levels overall.

INFORMATION PROVIDED TO TENANTS FOR PLANNED INVESTMENT

Tenants' choice aims to provide social housing tenants with the same choices and options that owner occupiers have.

Residents are given the opportunity to select the style and colour of many of the upgraded YHA facilities. They are also encouraged to have a significant input into the design phase on various projects.

Tenants are initially informed by a letter stating which investment works YHA are planning to carry out. Following this a brochure is produced to provide further detail about the chosen scheme and its particulars. The next stage would be to hold an open meeting/event to discuss the project with the tenants as a collective and answer any questions which they may have. This also provides an opportunity for products to be exhibited and for vital information to be received in relation to what we plan to do.

In addition to this, we also visit tenants homes individually. This allows us to incorporate any aspects of the life-time homes standard that we see as necessary (e.g. raised sockets, high level TRV's and Lever Taps).

Once the tender process has been completed for a given project, the Building Surveyor will visit site again with the contractor to discuss with the tenants exactly what is going happen. The Building Surveyor will remain a strong presence on site throughout the duration of the project in order to ensure everything runs smoothly and any issues can be addressed promptly.

As well as allowing the tenants to be involved in the details relating to the projects which will directly impact upon them, we also allow them to have an input on the structure and nature of the planned investment program. The recent introduction of our Fat Chance program allows residents to voice their opinions relating to which projects should take priority and which projects they feel are more important. This is vital, as it allows us to gain a great insight into the views of our tenants.

BUILDING WORKS AND MAINTENANCE PROCUREMENT PROCEDURE

The purpose of this procedure is to set out how the Association procures building and maintenance works, from finding contractors and consultants for consideration to the placing of orders, and to ensure a consistency of approach between the Operations and Development & Property Teams. Our aim is to have an open and transparent procedure for inclusion onto the approved lists and the distribution of works and contracts. We will strive to appoint the best contractors and consultants for each individual project and will always seek to achieve VfM in a number of ways i.e. competitive tender, the use of local organisations, partnership approaches etc. Separate written procedures exist covering the checking and payment of invoices.

All contractors and consultants who are to be offered work by the Association must be included on the **Approved List of Contractors and the Approved List of Consultants** (see below).

FINDING CONTRACTORS AND CONSULTANTS

The Association needs to ensure that it has sufficient contractors and consultants to call upon to provide an excellent, value for money service to all its tenants, whether that be for day to day, cyclical or planned maintenance. In addition it must be able to call on sufficient experienced contractors and consultants for its major development projects.

Possible but not limited to sources for finding the names of contractors and consultants who may be considered for inclusion onto the approved lists include:

- “Working With Us” a dedicated section on the YHA website.
- Recommendations from other associations working in the area.
- The Local Authority housing, building control, and environmental health departments, all of whom may have lists of contractors and trades.
- Community associations, particularly those working with ethnic minorities.
- Membership lists of professional organisations for various professions.
- Recommendations from internal and external customers.
- Local gazetteers and associated media.
- Direct applications from contractors and consultants themselves.

Contractors and consultants may be contacted initially by telephone to enquire if they are interested in working for the Association. The range of work which the Association has to offer should be explained. Some basic information on the size of the contractor, their area of operation, whether they have the relevant qualifications, should be ascertained at this stage to avoid abortive work.

DOCUMENTATION REQUIRED FROM CONTRACTORS AND CONSULTANTS TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE APPROVED LIST

If, following the initial conversation, it is decided to proceed; the contractor and consultants must be invited, in writing, to supply the following information:

- Copy of valid current insurances, public and employers liability.
- Copy of any relevant professional qualification.
- Completed Organisation and Capacity Report.
- Copy of their Equal Opportunities Policy (or written confirmation that they will work within the spirit of YHA's policy).
- Data Protection Compliance.
- Copy of Health and Safety Policy
- Copy of Environmental Policy
- Copy of most recent annual accounts.
- The names of three referees, preferably from Housing Associations, Local Authorities or housing related organisations.

Contractors and consultants who cannot supply any of the above which they are required statutorily to have, will not be considered further. Inclusion on the list where requirements are non-statutory will be at the Association's discretion.

INTERVIEWS

Contractors and consultants must also be invited for interview. Interviews should be carried out by two people from the following list:

Maintenance Manager, Housing Manager, Building Surveyor, Customer Service Manager, Development and Property Director, Operations Director.

Matters to be covered in the interview

The list below is no way exhaustive and matters to be discussed should be agreed with the interviewees and be relevant to the profession being interviewed:

- Explain that our priority is to provide a high quality, reliable, value for money service to tenants.
- Explain relevant repairs, investment and / or new build programmes and discuss the tendering process.
- Initiate discussion to explore the contractor's and consultants experience in working in domestic properties, particularly tenanted properties, and to allow staff to gauge contractor and consultants understanding of excellent customer service and their experience of delivering it.
- There are target times within which jobs must be completed – and that we do expect jobs to be done **within** those times, not on the last day.
- Explain the process for ordering works, the selection of contractors and consultants.
- The importance of carrying ID.
- Stress importance of appropriate behaviour as representatives of YHA.
- Ascertain hourly and daily rates for work.

- Ascertain whether an out-of-hours service can be offered.
- Describe how performance is continuously monitored.
- Describe system of annual performance reviews and feedback.
- Clarify any points which are unclear from the documentation and highlight any omissions.
- Initiate discussion to encourage contractors and consultants to demonstrate their knowledge of, and attitude towards Health and Safety legislation.
- Initiate discussion to elicit information on contractor and consultants attitude to Equality and Diversity issues.
- Emphasise that YHA is looking for contractors and consultants to work with us over the longer term, working in Partnership and building long term relationships with us and our tenants, enabling us to share problems and find solutions.

Note: Where a contractor or consultant is being interviewed specifically for work on major building projects in unoccupied properties, the emphasis of the interview will be different and may include more on equal opportunities amongst the workforce, environmental issues, and health and safety under the CDM regulations.

ACCEPTANCE ONTO THE APPROVED LIST

Following interview and completion of the necessary documentation, a recommendation must be made to the Development and Property Director or the Operations Director who will review first the recommendation and the documentation provided. Where accounts are provided the Finance Director will be asked to provide advice on the financial viability of the company. Where the contractor is a limited company a Dun and Bradstreet financial report will be obtained and submitted to the Finance Director. A joint decision will then be made by the Development and Property Director and the Operations Director who will inform all relevant staff and the contractor.

DELETION OR SUSPENSIONS FROM THE LIST

Recommendations for deletions or suspensions from the list, with detailed reasons for the recommendation, should be made in the first instance to either the Operations Director or the Development and Property Director, who will jointly decide on an appropriate course of action and inform all relevant staff and the contractor.

MAINTAINING, MONITORING AND REVIEWING THE LIST

To encourage a partnership ethos and to ensure all contractors and consultants currently on the YHA approved lists are regularly invited to tender for works and services where possible, we will not exceed 10 contractors (all trades) and 10 consultants (all disciplines) at any one time (excluding specialist services such as asbestos, surveys and suppliers etc). A file must be kept on each contractor and consultant, containing the initial documentation received. Checks should be made annually on each contractor and consultant to ensure that documentation is up-to-date and this is recorded on a check-list in each file. All contractors and consultants will be monitored regularly in relation to their performance. Following the annual review all new applications for inclusion onto the approved list will be discussed between the Development and Property Director and the Operations Director and any adds /

omissions from the list will be incorporated into the annual report presented to the Performance Committee.

REPORTING TO THE PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

The Development and Property Director will report annually to the Performance Committee, giving details of the current approved list and additions and deletions since the last report.

PLACING ORDERS

The procedures for placing orders, obtaining, opening and accepting tenders, and authorisation levels, are contained in the Association's Standing Orders, Appendices 2,3, and 4. (q.v.) [Rather than an attempt to summarise the procedures, as previously, the paragraph is cross-referenced to the full versions in the Standing Orders.]

OTHER RELEVANT POLICIES

Staff involved in the procurement of work by contractors for the Association must adhere to the Association's guidelines on probity, the acceptance of gifts or hospitality, and declarations of interest.

TENANT RECHARGE POLICY

MANAGED AGENCIES

Repairs and damage to properties managed by agencies that are not York Housing Association's responsibility, as scheduled in the management agreement, will be recharged to the relevant managing agent.

TENANTS

Damage to properties by tenants or where tenants have been negligent will be recharged to the tenant.

Within the Tenancy Agreement there is a list of repairs that are not York Housing Association's responsibility. Any repairs on this list carried out by York Housing Association for the tenant are rechargeable to the tenant at the discretion of the Housing Manager.

TENANTS' OWN IMPROVEMENTS POLICY

The Association is responsible for the upkeep and replacement of fixtures and fittings, however there are occasions when a tenant may wish to carry out their own improvements, examples are installing a shower, replacing a bathroom suite, changing kitchen units, etc.

If you are intending making improvements to your home you must first write to the Association requesting our permission, you must not start any work until you have received our written approval.

In order for the Association to deal with your request you will need to provide us with details of the improvement, tell us who will be carrying out the work, we will then consider your request before responding to you in writing.

~~Upon completion we will inspect the finished work and if it is to a good standard we would normally agree to adopt the improvement, whereupon it would become the property of the Association and our responsibility to maintain.~~

**ASBESTOS POLICY AND MANAGEMENT PLAN
KEY OBJECTIVES OF THE POLICY**

- To meet the legal requirements of the Association as Dutyholder in relation to all York HA owned and controlled premises which contain or may contain asbestos, and in accordance with the Health and Safety Executive Guidance notes 227 “A comprehensive Guide to Managing Asbestos in Premises”, and 264 “Asbestos, the Survey Guide”
- To ensure the identification and recording of the location of asbestos, the form of the asbestos, the condition of the asbestos and the type of asbestos in premises owned and controlled by the Association, in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2006 (CAR 2006) and Health and Safety Guidance Note 264.
- To prepare and maintain a Management Plan which will include a risk assessment for each recorded instance of an Asbestos Containing Material (ACM) in the Association’s buildings, and a recommended action for each.
- To identify an Appointed Person within the Association who will be responsible for the management of Asbestos within the Association’s buildings and for implementing the Management Plan.
- To make sure that employees involved in building maintenance work and any contractors, sub-contractors, maintenance personnel, residents and other users of the building know that the building contains or may contain asbestos, its type, the known location or possible location of asbestos and make sure they know the risks to their health if they disturb it.
- To ensure all staff, contractors, sub-contractors, maintenance personnel and all others likely to be involved with asbestos containing materials when working on the Association’s buildings have received proper training in Asbestos Awareness.
- To ensure that known ACMs are monitored regularly.
- To ensure that the Management Plan is reviewed every 6 months.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to set out, in a clear and precise manner, York Housing Association’s management plan for preventing and/ or controlling the risk of exposure to asbestos within Association buildings. It explains departmental and individual responsibilities regarding the control and management of asbestos in order to comply with the legislation and best practice and ultimately prevent long-term ill health to employees and others who may be affected by the presence of asbestos within Association buildings.

GENERAL POLICY

Policy Statement

1. The Association recognises the risk associated with asbestos and acknowledges its responsibility to ensure as far as is reasonably practicable that no-one works on any material that contains asbestos unless they know what it is, and to ensure that no-one is exposed to asbestos while they are on Association premises – whether they are there to work or for any other reason.

2. To achieve this, the Association will institute a Management Plan identifying, recording and managing asbestos (including safe working arrangements) in properties it controls, undertaking this in a planned and rational manner based on risk assessment. However, the Association affirms that asbestos-containing materials form an integral and important part of many premises and if well maintained, do not present any threat to health.

3. As a landlord, the Association acknowledges its responsibility to ensure the homes of its tenants are safe with respect to asbestos containing materials. It also acknowledges tenants should, as far as the Association can influence this, be free from anxiety about the use and condition of asbestos containing materials in their homes. The Association's Management Plan will ensure that:

-
- Remedial action based on risk assessment may take place immediately if there is a high risk. Otherwise action it may be planned into cyclical maintenance or refurbishment
 - Tenants are aware of the location of asbestos containing materials and advised of appropriate precautions to be taken.

4. Remedial action, including asbestos removal, will usually be undertaken by licensed contractors. Where the nature of the ACM is such that a licensed contractor is not required by legislation, the Association will ensure that work is carried out in accordance with a method statement based on HSE advice,

5. Appropriate training will be given to all Association employees who are involved with the maintenance and management of the Association's properties. This will include Asbestos Awareness training and training on the function and implementation of the Management Plan.

THE ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

Organisation and Responsibility

The Association deals with all asbestos related work primarily through the Property Department. The Development and Property Director is the **Duty Holder** whose area of responsibility is as follows:

- a. Implementing and updating the Asbestos Policy and Management Plan for the Association
- b. Having overall control of asbestos related matters within the Association.
- c. Maintaining the asbestos register

- d. Ensuring that all consultants, surveyors and contractors carrying out asbestos surveys or working in the Association's properties are suitably trained and qualified.
- e. Advising the Senior Management Team on asbestos related issues.
- f. Monitoring of systems associated with the implementation of the Association's policy on behalf of the Chief Executive.
- g. Advising on compliance with The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations and relevant Codes of Practice and Guidance Notes issued by the Health and Safety Executive or other recognised body.
- h. Identifying training needs of employees who may be exposed to asbestos.
- i. Obtaining quotations/ tenders from licensed specialist removal contractors.
- j. Arranging with relevant staff of other departments for the work to be carried out in accordance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations and relevant Codes of Practice.

Note there are however, situations where the Property Department may not initially be involved, for example where asbestos has been found unexpectedly whilst other work is being carried out under an order for day to day repairs, cyclical maintenance, or in the course of a service contract.

In all cases where asbestos is found, which requires removal, the Property Department should be informed immediately in order that a course of action may be determined.

The Property Department will report to the Chief Executive in advance of each Board meeting, on any issues arising out of the management and control of asbestos, in York Housing Association controlled buildings.

Training arrangements for Employees, Consultants and Contractors.

Those of the Association's employees who may have to enter or work in any of the Association's properties which contain asbestos will receive asbestos awareness training. Staff will need to be made aware of the following:

- The Association's Health and Safety Policy
- The Asbestos Policy and Management Plan.
- An understanding of asbestos, where it is found, medical effects and so on.
- Specific instructions on their key tasks and responsibilities including asbestos monitoring within the premises where they work, if relevant.
- Action that needs to be taken on discovering asbestos in poor condition.

All contractors working on the Association's properties will be expected to have had asbestos awareness training and this will be checked as part of the two-yearly contractor review. Any surveyors or other consultants working in the Association's properties will be asked to confirm upon appointment that they have had asbestos awareness training.

Arrangements for Identifying, Assessing, Dealing with and Monitoring Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs)

1. Asbestos Surveys

The Association has ensured that all statutorily required areas of its properties have had asbestos surveys carried out i.e. workplaces, communal areas including those in shared properties. In addition it will commission asbestos surveys where major intrusive works are to be carried out to properties, including within individual dwelling units. Surveys will only be commissioned from surveyors accredited by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) to carry out asbestos surveys.

2. The Asbestos Register

The Association will maintain an asbestos register containing the results of all asbestos surveys. The information recorded will include:

- a. description of location of asbestos in the property;
- b. type and condition of the asbestos;
- c. how much of it there is;
- d. what form it is in (e.g. tiles, boards, cement sheets);
- e. what it looks like (e.g. if painted, what colour);
- f. date this information was ascertained;
- g. proposed action;
- h. priority rating for action;
- i. information on location, condition and proposed action given to owners/occupiers;
- j. description of remedial works;
- k. date remedial works carried out;
- l. details of necessary labelling
- m. date of last inspection;
- n. action as result of last inspection;
- o. date of next inspection.

The Asbestos Register will be kept in a Directory on the Association's computer system which is accessible to all staff. In addition, any property where ACMs have been found will have this information flagged on the Universal Housing record system, to ensure that it is brought to the attention of those placing orders and thence to contractors.

3. Assessing and Dealing with Asbestos Containing Materials

The risks associated with each identified ACM must be assessed by the Association and appropriate action taken. Factors which must be taken into account include:

- product type
- extent of damage or deterioration

- surface treatment; and
- asbestos type
- the location of the material
- the extent
- the use to which the location is put;
- the occupancy of the area
- the activities carried on in the area;
- the likelihood/frequency with which maintenance activities are likely to take place.

The assessment will determine what action should be taken. Possible actions are:

- removal
- repair
- encapsulation
- enclosure
- management

A licensed asbestos removal contractor must be used wherever this is required. Whatever action is taken must be recorded in the Asbestos Register and a date for further monitoring set.

4. Updating the Information

It will be necessary to update the Asbestos Register as the opportunity arises. For example:

- a. Periodic re-inspections of buildings for the purpose of reassessing the location and condition of asbestos. The period between inspections will depend on the type of material and its condition when last inspected.
- b. Following repair/improvement works to treat asbestos in a property.
- c. As part of a routine stock condition survey.

5. Reviewing the Register and Management Plan

This must be done every six months, in January and July.

PROCEDURE FOR CARRYING OUT PLAYGROUND INSPECTIONS

The Association is required to ensure the health and safety of users of its playground equipment and surrounding area. Regular inspections will be carried out and any works required to maintain the equipment and area will be carried out as a priority. The following procedure should be followed for carrying out playground inspections:

1. The Property Maintenance Worker (PMW) will carry out visual and full inspections of the playground equipment and surrounding area. A visual inspection will be carried out monthly for the first two months of a quarter, with a full quarterly inspection being carried out in the third month of the quarter. A visual inspection will not involve physical testing of the structure, but any visual signs of wear and tear must be acted upon. The PMW must sign the checklist to say they have carried out the inspections.
2. The inspections will be diaried into the PMW work plan by the Customer Service Assistants as an ongoing requirement.
3. A checklist sheet must be completed for each quarter and handed to the Customer Service Team Manager (CSTM) immediately following the full inspection. Where no concerns are found, the CSTM needs to sign off the checklist to confirm that they have seen the outcome of the inspections and place the checklist on the Playground Inspection file.
4. Should any concerns be found during a visual or full inspection, the PMW must bring this to the CSTM's attention immediately. Under no circumstances should they wait until the checklist is due to be handed in.
5. Where concerns have been recorded the CSTM will inform the Maintenance Officer (MO) to discuss the concern and what action is required. The CSTM will arrange for any orders to be raised as a priority, where work is needed to rectify the concern. Where the work required is unclear or more complex, the MO will carry out an inspection as a priority and within no more than five working days to ascertain what is required to correct any defects/problems and arrange for any orders to be raised immediately. Orders will be placed on a five day order, however, where it is not possible for the work to be carried out within five days, the CSTM is to be kept informed and will take any appropriate action to ensure the health and safety of the area is not compromised.
6. Where a piece of equipment or play area is deemed to be too dangerous for use, immediate action will be taken to safeguard potential users. Where it is not possible to remove or prevent further use of the defective equipment immediately, relevant signage such as taping and signs will be used to inform possible users of the playground that equipment must not be used. This will remain in place until the equipment can be repaired, removed or permanent barriers are put in place. The Housing Officer must be informed immediately and kept informed of progress.
7. Where extensive work is required, this will also be brought to the attention of the Operations Director.

8. Where it is not deemed necessary to carry out any work at the present time but to keep an eye on the area of concern, this will be recorded on the checklist by the MO, stating the regularity required to check the area. Once this has been completed the checklist must be filed on the Playground Inspection File.
9. Annual checks of the playground equipment and area will be carried out by an external qualified organisation. These will be arranged by the CSTM.
10. The MO will ensure the checklist is kept up to date to ensure all areas requiring checks are detailed on the form. This is to include the surrounding area as well as equipment.
11. The CSTM and MO will review risk assessments annually, or sooner should there be any accidents, concerns or changes to equipment or the area. Frequency of inspections will also be kept under review to ensure frequency is as required.
12. Should any new playgrounds be installed at other schemes, a full risk assessment will be carried out by the CSTM and MO immediately after installation and inspections will begin immediately by the PMW.
13. In the instance of long term absence of the PMW, it will be the MO's

ADAPTATIONS POLICY

This policy applies to the Association's general needs and direct managed supported housing stock. Where requests are received for larger adaptations to student housing each requests will be assessed on its merits, taking account of period of time the student is likely to remain in the property, availability of grant funding and other housing options available to the student. Larger adaptations will not be carried out to PSL properties but staff will work with the tenant and other relevant agencies to assist the tenant/licensee in finding suitable alternative accommodation. In the case of larger adaptations in Agency Managed supported housing, the Association will use its best endeavours to assist the relevant agency in accessing grant funding.

York Housing Association recognises that tenants' enjoyment of their homes may from time to time be restricted through a disability, long term illness or onset of age and that when this happens most people would prefer to remain in their home. Wherever we can we will assist to ensure this is possible and our Adaptations Policy is designed to reflect this. We will:

- a) Set a yearly budget. If the budget is likely to be exceeded, it will be brought to SMT/Board's attention for a decision on further funding
- b) Where appropriate grant requests for minor adaptations, such as handrails, without the need for tenants to seek a recommendation from a Doctor or Occupational Health Therapist.
- c) Identify and work with tenants to obtain grant funding for larger adaptations
- d) Give assistance, advice, information, or refer to the local authority's Community Services department for an Occupational Therapist's assessment
- e) Carry out adaptations where recommended and practicable without undue delay and with minimal disruption to the tenant and their household.
- f) Where any part of the process is outside of our control, cooperate with and bring to bear influence to achieve a speedy resolution
- g) Keep in regular contact with all parties, discuss and consider other options
- g) Carry out inspections during the work and upon completion, to ensure the adaptation is to a good standard and fully meets the specification and the needs of the user

We will treat all enquiries for adaptations with confidentiality, sensitivity and equality.

Our aim is to carry out adaptations as quickly as possible. We will:-

- i) Acknowledge enquiries within 5 working days and continually keep all parties aware of progress

- ii) Where necessary and within 30 working days of official notification for an adaptation, arrange to visit the property, take measurements, draw up specifications that meet the recommendations of the Occupational Therapist, select contractors suitably experienced in the disciplines necessary to carry out the work, obtain quotations and forward documentation to the local authority for grant funding
- iii) Consider requests for minor adaptations by Occupational Therapists or tenants and where reasonable, and providing there are sufficient funds available to meet the cost of the work, raise an order within 5 working days
- iv) Upon being notified by the local authority that grant funding has been approved, raise an order for the work within 5 working days
- v) Arrange with all parties a mutually convenient date for work to commence
- vi) Inspect the finished work
- vii) Comply with the allocations policy to ensure wherever possible adapted properties that become vacant are allocated to applicants who are in need of such adaptations. Where this is not possible and the property is allocated to a household who do not require the adaptation, it will remain as part of the fixtures and fittings and will only be removed in exceptional circumstances (e.g. stairlifts). We will also grant requests to remove stairlifts where a bereavement or permanent change to a household's circumstances has occurred and there is no longer a need for the adaptation.

Definition of Adaptations

Minor Adaptations are likely to include;

Handrails

Small Ramps

Over-bath Showers

Alternations to existing Door Entry Systems

Doorbells, Smoke Detectors for the hard of hearing

Lever Taps

Shower Seats

Widening of a Doorway

Door/Window Handles

Larger adaptations are likely to include;

Walk in Showers

Hoists

New Door Entry Systems

Stairlifts

Large Ramps

Specialist baths and wc's

Kitchen adaptations

Specialist Treatment Rooms

Widening of Doorways and Passages

CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE POLICY

York Housing Association operate a five yearly programme of cyclical maintenance whereby exteriors of buildings, communal stairways and interiors of community centres are repainted. Prior to the painting, inspections will be carried out to identify any repairs that require attention before the painting begins.

Tenants are made aware of when their homes are to be painted and are given the opportunity to choose colours. Each tenant is provided with a satisfaction survey form in which they are able to comment following completion of the work.

ELECTRICAL INSPECTIONS

This policy is influenced by section P of the Building Regulations.

Where minor alterations and additions are made to existing installations, it will be necessary for a minor works certificate to be issued by the approved electrical contractor. This will detail the additions made to current systems.

Where major installations have been completed, a full Periodical Inspection Report (PIR) of the system will be ordered.

A rolling 5 year cyclical programme for PIR Testing is also in place. All properties will have a valid PIR which will be renewed in accordance with any upgrades to existing systems or before the existing test reaches its expiry date.

Where possible, cyclical testing will be completed on void properties when the anniversary date is less than 365 days away. This will continue to ensure that we can demonstrate a good balance between appropriate safety awareness and Value For Money (VFM).

GAS POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy applies to all properties and gas appliances where YHA has a legal or regulatory duty to maintain gas appliances and fittings. This includes;

- All properties owned or managed by YHA
- All gas appliances and fittings provided by former tenants where these have been left in place following void inspection.

In the case of shared ownership properties, although YHA does not have a legal or regulatory duty to maintain gas appliances, we will offer occupants the opportunity to pay for an annual safety check and service.

Gas safety is of paramount importance to YHA and tenants and this policy aims to ensure that we meet our legal and best practice obligations as a landlord.

The implementation of the gas servicing programme requires strict adherence to procedures by staff and contractors and full co-operation from tenants. Consequently the Association has developed procedures for programming of works, checking Landlord's Gas Safety Record (LGSR's) also known as CP12's, adding/deleting properties to/from the gas register, non access arrangements, void management and third party auditing to ensure compliance with Gas Safety (Installation and use) Regulations 1998.

The gas servicing programme is also an important aspect of asset management, ensuring that appliances are maintained, their useful life is maximised whilst ensuring energy efficiency for tenants and that value for money is achieved.

BACKGROUND AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

YHA has legal obligations under a number of statutes and regulations, including;

- Gas Safety (Installation and use) Regulations 1998 (GSIUR)
- Health and safety at work act 1974
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations 1992
- The Landlord and Tenant Act 1985

Regulation 36 of the GSIUR requires landlords to ensure that all gas appliances and fittings (including gas installation pipework and flues) provided by the landlord are maintained in a safe condition. This Regulation also requires landlords to carry out a safety check on gas appliances and fittings at least once in every 12 month period. Where it has not been possible to carry out a gas safety check within the 12 month period because access has not been provided landlords are required to demonstrate that all reasonable steps to secure access have been taken.

Once a gas safety check has been carried out landlords are required to provide the tenant with a copy of the LGSR certificate within 28 days of the safety check being carried out. In addition, new tenants are to be provided with a LGSR in relation to the most recent gas safety check prior to taking up occupation. This safety check must have been carried out within the last 12 month period. .

Landlords as required to keep records for at least 2 years of all gas safety checks carried out and for these to be available for inspection by tenants and other interested parties. .

Regulation 3 of the GSIUR states that only competent persons (currently Gas Safe Register Accredited Engineers) shall carry out safety checks, repairs, installations and other relevant works.

Regulation 30 of the GSIUR requires that gas fires, gas space heaters or gas water heaters are not installed in a room intended to be used as a bathroom or shower or for sleeping accommodation unless it is room sealed.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 require employers to carry out a Risk Assessment in relation to gas safety checks and servicing as they relate to tenants employees and other affected individuals.

In relation to gas safety, the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 1995 (RIDDOR) require;

- Gas Safe Registered Engineers to report dangerous gas appliances and fittings they find and gas conveyors/suppliers to report some flammable gas incidents
- The reporting of death or major injury arising out of carbon monoxide poisoning

Section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 requires landlords to keep in repair and proper working order installations for the supply of gas, space heating and heating water in its rented accommodation.

GAS CONTRACT

YHA has chosen to procure, through a framework agreement, the annual servicing programme, void safety checks and responsive heating and water heating repairs as we feel this delivers best value for money and a quality service to tenants. The contract period is for 3 years, with an option to extend for a further 12 month period providing there has been a high level of performance and value for money is still being achieved. At least two tenants will be on the selection panel.

Before the contract is let, and on an annual basis thereafter, the contractor will be expected to provide YHA with copies of its Gas Safe Registration and Accreditation for engineers to be employed on the contract. If a new engineer is employed on the contract mid way through the year the contractor must also supply a copy of their Accreditation.

VOIDS

When a property becomes void, in line with best practice, we will carry out a gas safety check regardless of the date of the last LSGR. This also applies to mutual exchanges. The date of this safety check must be recorded on the gas register to ensure that the next safety check is programmed for the correct date.

Where a property is subject to a void period between lets, YHA will arrange to cap off the gas supply within 2 working days of receipt of the keys and the contractor shall issue a LSGR to confirm the supply has been capped off. On completion of the void works the Association shall arrange a "turn on & test" check and issue a LSGR which will be valid for a 12 month period. The CSA will then update the gas register with the new date.

GAS SERVICING PROGRAMME

In accordance with GSIUR, all properties will receive a gas safety check and service at least once in every 12 month period. The Maintenance Manager meets with the contractor annually to plan the programme for the coming 12 months. Programme planning commences 42 days before the expiry of the current LSGR. The contractor sends out appointments to ensure that the safety check and servicing programme commences 28 days prior to expiry of the current LSGR. The Maintenance Manager is required to ensure value for money by programming the safety checks and services bringing those properties to the front of the programme where the LSGR is due to expire the soonest. The only exception to this is where access has been difficult in previous years and those properties should also be brought to the front of the programme. The Maintenance Officer is responsible for ensuring the minimisation of risk by following the Gas Non Access Procedure – Appendix 1.

On completion of the safety check the contractor is required to leave a copy of the LSGR in the property. An electronic and hard copy must also be provided to YHA within 5 days of completion.

DISTRIBUTION AND STORAGE OF LSGR's

Under the GSIUR the contractor is obliged to provide the tenant with a copy of the LSGR within 28 days of the check. However, in YHA properties where these are tenanted or managed, on completion of the safety check, the operative shall complete a LSGR in an approved format and hand to the tenant.

A further hard copy (Landlords) and electronic copy of the LSGR shall be submitted to the Association within 5 working days of the completion of the check.

On receipt from the contractor, the LSGR is date stamped and checked by a CSA in accordance with the YHA Procedure for Checking of LSGR's.

Where properties are not tenanted at the time of the safety check the contractor shall provide YHA with the Landlords & Tenants copies of the LSGR along with an electronic copy within 5 days of the completion of the safety check. The tenant copy shall form part of the new tenancy sign up pack to be handed to the tenant at tenancy sign up.

YHA currently keeps hard copy records of LGSR's for a minimum of 2 years, along with electronic versions, and is working towards keeping electronic copies dating back a minimum of 6 years.

The procedure for checking and verifying LGSR's is attached as appendix 2.

GAS REGISTER

YHA keeps an electronic record of all properties where it has a Landlords responsibility for gas appliances, the register will keep historic service details, make and models of appliances and a hyperlink to the most current LSGR and test results.

AMENDMENTS TO THE GAS REGISTER

From time to time it will be necessary to update the gas register by adding new properties or deleting any properties that have been disposed of. Attached as appendix is the process for updating the gas register.

THIRD PARTY AUDIT

In order that we can demonstrate that the gas contractor is providing a quality service and meeting health and safety requirements we will commission an annual third party audit by a suitably qualified external consultant once the servicing programme is completed. The third party audit will undertake an inspection on a random selection of 10% of properties.

CONTRACTOR MONITORING

Within the framework agreement YHA will have real-time access to the contractors IT system through web-portal access to utilise information for recording and managing access, work completions, scheduling and property information.

In order to ensure the Association receives a high quality and consistent service which continues to offer value for money, YHA will hold monthly review meetings which will be minuted to monitor KPI's, benchmarking, quality, compliments and complaints, innovations and contractors internal quality audits.

The main demand for servicing arises in July, November & January and during this time the contractor will be expected to provide weekly updates on;

% of appointments made in advance of the usual 28 day timescale due to historic difficulties with gaining access (full list of properties brought to the front of the programme will have been agreed with the Maintenance Officer at the programme planning meeting)

Appointments made and kept.

Number of cases where access was achieved at each level (attempt one, two and three)

Confirmation that the contractor is on schedule to complete the programme in the agreed timescale.

% of LGSR's provided to tenants within 28 days (explanations must be provided for anything below 100%)

Number of LGSR's completed out of date (contractor will be expected to demonstrate that 3 attempts at access have taken place 14 days prior to expiry of the LGSR).

Throughout the year the contractor will also be expected to report monthly on any of the above KPI's where servicing activity has taken place during that period.

YHA will also carry out its own monitoring of;

Customer satisfaction with the gas servicing process (random 10% sample) and will report this back to the contractor

Number of cases not referred to the Association in a timely manner after 3 no access attempts..

There are further contractual KPI's included within the Gas Framework agreement and these are attached as appendix B to the Gas Contract and monitored at the monthly meeting with the contractor. The contract also sets out full health and safety requirements and other compliance requirements.

USEFUL INFORMATION

YHA promotes the safe use of gas in all its properties and there are a range of useful leaflets for tenants available through the following websites

www.britishgas.co.uk

www.GasSaferegister.co.uk

**YORK HOUSING ASSOCIATION
GAS NON ACCESS PROCEDURE**

Stage One – Planning the programme (42 before expiry of LGSR)

Gas programme planned between the gas contractor and the Maintenance Manager. Servicing will not commence before 28 days of LGSR anniversary date unless exceptional circumstances are encountered. Any properties where access proved difficult last year to be brought to the front of the programme (unless there was a change of tenant during the year). The Maintenance Manager has the discretion, taking account of both potential risk and value for money, to start the programme more than 4 weeks before the expiry of the current LGSR.

Stage Two – Contractor Phase (42-14 days before expiry of LGSR)

Initial contact with tenants will be made by the contractor up to 6 weeks in advance of the LGSR expiry date. This contact will be communication by letter, text or other media advising that the service is due and giving an appointment date (**formal contact 1**).

If access is gained at the first appointment then the service is completed and no further action is needed.

If access is not gained then the contractor leaves a card through the door advising that access had been attempted as per the arrangement and the tenant needs to immediately contact to make another appointment.

If, after 5 working days, the tenant has not been in touch to make an appointment the contractor sends a further letter scheduling another appointment (**formal contact 2**).

If access is gained at the second appointment then the service is completed and no further action is needed.

If access is not gained at the second appointment then the contractor leaves a card through the door advising that for the second time access had been attempted as per the arrangement and the tenant needs to immediately contact to make another appointment.

If, after 5 working days, the tenant has not been in touch to make an appointment the contractor sends a final letter scheduling another appointment (**formal contact 3**). At this point the contractor must let YHA know that they are having difficulty gaining access so that YHA staff can start to help assist with the process.

The contractor must have completed three attempts to gain access within 14 days of the anniversary date of the LGSR.

Stage Three – Joint Contractor and YHA involvement between second and third visit (21 to 14 days before expiry of LGSR)

At this stage the contractor is still responsible for completing three attempts to gain access. However, YHA staff become involved to help the contractor with this process.

The contractor notifies YHA immediately the third appointment letter has been sent. The Maintenance Officer brings details of any properties where two appointments have been missed to the weekly Gas Progress meeting. This meeting is attended by representatives from repairs, housing management, customer service and support. This team of staff is responsible for undertaking a risk assessment and agreeing which member of staff should make contact with the tenant (for instance it may be more appropriate for a Housing Officer or Support Worker to make contact with the tenant where there are vulnerability issues). Details of the risk assessment and member of staff responsible for following up must be recorded on the non access spreadsheet. All subsequent attempts to contact the tenant and gain access must also be recorded on this spreadsheet as this will provide evidence should the matter proceed to court. A flag must also be put on HCRM stating that there is a non access issue and the customer service team alerted so that if the tenant makes contact for any other reason they are put through to the Maintenance Officer or repairs CSA to arrange an appointment.

Attempts to gain access should be made every two days up until expiry of the LGSR or safety check completed.

Stage Four – Access not gained on third visit (14 days before expiry of LGSR)

~~The contractor informs YHA immediately that appointment not kept~~

YHA non access letter 1 (**formal contact 4**) to be posted out immediately.

In addition to YHA non access letter 1, a YHA staff member must make contact with the tenant by personal visit to the property. The staff member assigned to carry out the visit will have been agreed at the weekly Gas Progress meeting (note where there are any concerns regarding staff safety then a joint visit will be arranged and staff must carry lone worker protection).

Stage Five – Access not gained (LGSR expired)

On the day of expiry of the LGSR the Maintenance Officer and the gas contractor must attend the property to try to gain access to complete the safety check – where appropriate they should be accompanied by a Housing Officer or Support Worker.

If the tenant refuses access then it should be explained that YHA will immediately commence court action. The Maintenance Officer must tape an A4 warning notice to the front door and the gas meter.

If the tenant is not at home then the Maintenance Officer must hand deliver YHA non access letter 2 (**formal contact 5**) and tape an A4 warning notice to the front door and the gas meter.

The Housing Manager is responsible for preparing court papers and applying for an injunction ordering the tenant to provide access. The Maintenance Officer will supply the necessary evidence. Should the matter proceed to court then the Housing Manager or a Housing Officer will attend to give evidence.

Once the LGSR has expired and court action is commenced staff must attempt to contact the tenant on a daily basis to try to gain access.

Stage Six – Court Order (LGSR expired)

Once an injunction is granted a further appointment must be made for the safety check to be carried out within 7 days.

If access is granted no further action will be taken other than to pursue the tenant for court costs.

If access is not granted or an alternative appointment arranged then the matter should be referred back to court for breach of injunction. At this stage further legal advice should be sought to ensure that YHA can force access if necessary.

Non access in subsequent years

If the same situation occurs again in the following year with the same tenant then the case will be referred to the Operations Director with a view to seeking possession for continued breach of tenancy.



Gas contractor no access letter 1

FAO - The Tenant
14 Bretgate
York
YO1 9XQ

Important Safety Notification

The GAS Company Ref No. 857

IMPORTANT ANNUAL GAS SAFETY CHECK

REMINDER NOTICE

Dear Sir/Madam,

According to our records we have NOT CARRIED OUT THE FREE ANNUAL GAS SAFETY CHECK on the appliances in your home. The Gas Company have tried to gain access to carry out this essential work, but have been unsuccessful on -

I would like to remind you of Landlords legal obligation, under regulation 36 of the Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, to carry out a safety check of a gas appliances every 12 months.

In order to arrange urgent access to complete this important safety work it is essential that you contact the Gas Company on the free phone number indicated below

BEFORE :-

FREE PHONE 0800 9150323 - (Office hours 08:00 to 17:00)

If the Gas safety check has already been carried out I must apologise for any inconvenience caused, but our priority in this matter must be your safety. If this is the case can you please contact us on 0800 9150323 so we can update our records.

Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours faithfully

Lyndsay Douglas
The Gas Company

The Gas Company are Gas Safe Registered and are the approved Gas Servicing Contractor for the York Housing Association.

**PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS LETTER - IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE
CARBON MONOXIDE THE HIDDEN KILLER**



Gas contractor no access letter 2

FAO - The Tenant

14 Bretgate

York

YO1 9XQ

Important Safety Notification

Gas Company Ref No:- 2344

IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE FINAL REMINDER

Dear Sir/Madam,

According to our records we have not completed the annual safety check of the gas appliances in your property.

The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998 require landlords to ensure all gas appliances and pipework are serviced and tested at intervals not exceeding 12 months.

Our approved contractor, The Gas Company has been unable to gain access to your property or contact yourself, on the dates detailed below -

Initial Notification Letter -

First Attendance No Access

No Access Reminder Letter-

As you will appreciate, it is important that the Contractor is allowed access to fulfil our obligations.

A FINAL APPOINTMENT HAS THEREFORE BEEN MADE FOR :-

IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT ACCESS IS GAINED ON THE ABOVE DATE. IF THIS IS NOT CONVENIENT PLEASE CONTACT THE GAS COMPANY ON THE FREE PHONE TELEPHONE NUMBER BELOW WITHIN 48 HOURS OF RECEIPT OF THIS LETTER TO ARRANGE ALTERNATIVE ACCESS.

FREE PHONE 0800 9150323

SHOULD THE GAS COMPANY FAIL TO GAIN ACCESS AND COMPLETE THE SAFETY CHECK YORK HOUSING ASSOCIATION MAY INSTIGATE LEGAL ACTIONS TO GAIN ENTRY.

Yours sincerely

Lyndsay Douglas

The Gas Company

PLEASE DO NOT IGNORE THIS REQUEST - IT COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE

CARBON MONOXIDE THE HIDDEN KILLER

Gas contractor no access letter 3

York Housing Association
2 Alpha Court
Monks Cross Drive
Huntington
York
YO32 9WN

The Gas Co. Ref No. 857: 2344

ANNUAL GAS SAFETY CHECK/SERVICE

TENANT NO RESPONSE

Dear Sir/Madam,

with reference to the property, detailed below -

14 Bretgate York

Annual GAS Service Due - Thursday 05 February 2015

In an attempt to conduct the GAS service, at the above property. The GAS Company has been unable to contact the tenant, or gain access to the property, as detailed below -

1st Notification Letter -

No Access to Property -

Tenant Reminder Letter -

Final Reminder Letter -

Final Attendance -

The GAS Company now require your assistance to gain access to the property to complete the safety check.

Thank you for your co operation in this matter.

Yours faithfully

Lyndsay Douglas
The Gas Company

GAS NO ACCESS LETTER 1

Tenants Name & Address

Dear (Tenants Name)

Re Important Notice – Annual Gas Safety Check – First Reminder – Expires on (INSERT DATE)

As your landlord, York Housing Association has a duty under the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out an annual gas safety inspection in your home. The inspection is essential to safeguard you, your family and neighbours.

Approximately 20 people per year die of carbon monoxide poisoning in the UK

Carbon Monoxide is an invisible gas that has no taste or smell. You are more at risk if your appliances have not been checked for safety or maintained regularly. We do not want you, your family or neighbours to die of carbon monoxide poisoning. This is why you must make sure you allow our contractors to check the safety of your appliances.

Our authorised contractors, The Gas Company, have written to you and visited your home several times to carry out this work. So far you have failed to respond to these letter or visits and you have not allowed access to your home for this essential safety work to be carried out.

You must contact The Gas Company on 0800 9150323 immediately to arrange a convenient time for an inspection to take place even if you do not have current gas supply to your property.

If you have already arranged an appointment or have had your gas appliances serviced within the last few days, please contact me on 01904 636061

Yours faithfully

GAS NO ACCESS LETTER 2

LEGAL ACTION

Tenants Name & Address

Dear (Tenants Name)

**Re Important Notice – Annual Gas Safety Check – Legal Action – Expires on
(INSERT DATE)**

Following my letters of (date), (date) & (date) regarding the above safety check, as you have failed to provide access and have not arranged an appointment with our contractor to carry out the annual gas safety check to the appliances within your home, I am writing to advise you that we have now commenced legal action. This involves applying to the court to gain an injunction forcing access to your property. You will shortly receive details of the court hearing. You should also note that you will be re-charged for any costs incurred against yourself relating to this court process. If you wish to cease these court proceedings then you will need to get in touch with me immediately to arrange for the annual gas service to be carried out.

York Housing Association has a duty under the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998 to carry out an annual gas safety inspection in your home. The inspection is essential to safeguard you, your family and neighbours. This is now a very serious matter.

Approximately 20 people per year die of carbon monoxide poisoning in the UK

Carbon Monoxide is an invisible gas that has no taste or smell. You are more at risk if your appliances have not been checked for safety or maintained regularly. We do not want you, your family or neighbours to die of carbon monoxide poisoning. This is why you must make sure you allow our contractors to check the the safety of your appliances.

You must contact The Gas Company on 0800 9150323 immediately to arrange a convenient time for an inspection to take place within the next 5 days even if you do not have current gas supply to your property.

If you have already arranged an appointment or have had you gas appliances serviced within the last few days, please contact me on 01904 636061

Yours faithfully

Gas No Access Spreadsheet

L:\Development and Property\Gas Contract\Policies and Procedures\No Access

CHECKING AND VERIFYING LANDLORDS GAS SAFETY RECORD FORM

The law requires that all Tenanted properties with gas appliances owned by the Landlord must have a current Landlord's Gas Safety Record in place and a copy given to the Customer within 28 days of the safety check being carried out. Copies must be held for at least 2 years.

The record must contain the following information:

1. The date on which the appliance or flue was checked.
2. The address of the premises at which the appliance or flue is installed.
3. The name & address of the Landlord of the premises (or where appropriate his agent) at which the appliance or flue is installed.
4. A description of and the location of each appliance or flue.
5. Any defect identified.
6. Any remedial work undertaken.
7. Confirmation that the check undertaken complies with but not limited to the requirements of sub-paragraphs (a) to (d) of regulation 26(9)
8. The name and signature of the individual carrying out the work also check against his Gas Safe registration details. The printed name MUST be legible for the certificate to be valid
9. The registration number with which that individual or his employer is registered with Gas Safe

Notes on completion of certificates

Landlord's Gas Safety Record documents should be completed clearly with positive recording and without alterations.

They should be completed with either PASS or FAIL YES NO or N/A.

It is not acceptable to tick or ignore boxes and certificates completed in this way should be rejected. The certificate should also indicate NO OTHER APPLIANCES.

Copies and distribution

Three copies of the Landlord's Gas Safety Record are required and should be referred to in the following way.

Copy 00 - held by the Landlord and is the master copy.

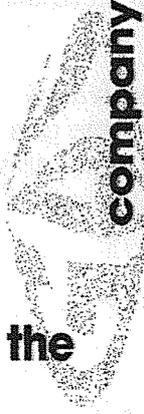
Copy 01 - Customer.

Copy 02 - SP.

Receipt of LGSR's

In accordance with the requirements of the GSIUR the contractor is required to list on the LSGR all instances of non-compliance with the regulations. On receipt of the LSGR, this is date stamped by the receiving CSA and checked in accordance with the YHA checking procedure and passed to the Maintenance Officer. Where instances other than not to current standards are noted these are immediately actioned by the Maintenance Officer/ Manager. Where action is not required (eg not to current standard but no risk) the Maintenance Officer will initial the certificate to confirm that no action is to be taken.

Landlord's Gas Safety Record



Safety Checked by:
THE GAS COMPANY (UK) LIMITED
 1 Bonhoff Avenue, Hull, HU5 4HF. Tel: 01482 47 46 46

This inspection is for gas safety purposes only in accordance with Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations. Flues were inspected visually and checked for satisfactory evacuation of products of combustion. A detailed internal inspection of the flue integrity, construction and lining has not been carried out.

Gas Safe Registration No. 118649

TENANTS
 Name: AMY HOWLE (2)
 Address: 9 The Sidings Eggborough
DN14 0SL Tel: N/A

LANDLORD (OR WHERE APPROPRIATE THEIR AGENT)
 Name: Y H A (3)
 Address: 2 ALPHA COURT MARKS CROSS DRIVE
HUNTINGTON
YOAC 403 9WN Tel: 01904 636061

APPLIANCE DETAILS				INSPECTION DETAILS											
LOCATION	TYPE	MAKE	MODEL	FLUE TYPE OF or BS FL - FF	COMBUSTION ANALYSIS READING (if applicable)	Operating Pressure near or Heat Input BTU/KW	Safety Device Correct Operation Yes/No	Ventilation Satisfactory Yes/No	Visual Condition of Flue Pass/Fail	FLUE PERFORMANCE CHECK Flue Flow Test Pass/Fail	Sediment Test Pass/Fail	Termination Satisfactory Yes/No	Appearance Safe to use Yes/No	Landlord's Appliance Yes/No	Inspected Yes/No
1	Water CHB	Boaxi	NEGATIVE	F-F	0.0004	15.1kV	YES	YES	PASS	N/A	N/A	YES	YES	YES	YES
2															
3															
4															
5															

DETAILS OF ANY FAULTS		REMEDIAL ACTION TAKEN	LABEL AND WARNING ISSUED YES/NO
1	Flue pointing down should be boiler	back to boiler	NO
2			
3			
4			
5	CO ppm 36 CO2 % 9.0 Ratio 0.0004	METER WORKING PRESSURE	21 mV

Gas Installation: lightness test PASS FAIL

Gas Installation: tightness test PASS FAIL

This Safety record is issued by Signed: P. EVANS Operatives Reg No: 118649 Date: 08/10/14
 Received on behalf of the landlord Signed: X A Howle Print Name: P. EVANS Operatives Reg No: 355368
 Print Name: AMY HOWLE Tenant / Agent / Landlord

White Copy - Landlord/Agent Green Copy - Tenant Yellow Copy - Installer

Number of Appliances Inspected: 0 / 1

PROCEDURE FOR ADDING PROPERTIES ONTO THE GAS REGISTER

New Developments

The property handover form is to be completed by development. This form includes a requirement to update the gas register if there is any gas at the property. The form goes over to the Finance department, the property is then set up on Universal Housing (UH). Here the property must be added to UH within 2 working days.

Finance will sign and date the form to confirm when the action has been completed. This form will then be passed to the CSA who has responsibility for updating the gas register. The CSA must then update the gas register within 2 working days. Once this has been carried out the CSA will sign off the property handover form to confirm that the action has been completed.

This form will be scanned and attached to the property file for future reference

Broadacres

For a new property to be added to the Broadacres contract, a YHA Maintenance Officer (MO) will complete a property handover form. This form includes a requirement to ~~update the gas register if there is any gas at the property. The form goes over to the~~ Finance department, the property is then set up on Universal Housing (UH). Here the property must be added to UH within 2 working days.

Finance will sign and date the form to confirm when the action has been completed. This form will then be passed to the CSA who has responsibility for updating the gas register. The CSA must then update the gas register within 2 working days. Once this has been carried out the CSA will sign off the property handover form to confirm that the action has been completed.

This form will be scanned and attached to the property file for future reference

Investment/planned works (conversion of electric to gas)

A Handover form will need to be completed by the Building Surveyor within 2 days of receiving a valid CP12 for any gas installation. This will notify of any additions required to the Gas Register. This will be passed to the CSA responsible for maintaining the Gas Register. The CSA must then update the gas register within 2 working days with details relating to the new installation.

A copy of the handover form will then be added to the investment scheme file and saved for future reference.

Each time the gas register is updated the CSA sends an email to the gas contractors regarding the additions to the properties list/contract. This email will contain both property and boiler information required by the contractors. This email will be send with a delivery receipt to allow YHA to confirm that the email has been received.

LETTABLE STANDARD

INTRODUCTION

York Housing Association's Lettable Standard ensures that each property re-let meets a minimum standard in terms of providing a decent home to tenants.

The Standard will ensure that when we re-let a property we meet, and where possible exceed, the four main criteria for the government's Decent Homes Standard;

- Meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- Is in a reasonable state of repair
- Has reasonably modern facilities and services
- Provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort

It also provides staff with guidance on dealing consistently with any properties that do not meet this Standard.

DEALING WITH VACANT PROPERTIES

In order to maximise income and reduce voids, the Association aims to re-let properties with no void period. Any minor repairs will be completed once the new tenant is in occupation. The Housing Officer will carry out a pre-vacancy inspection of the property within the 28 day Notice period. They will take a note of the condition of the property and notify the outgoing tenant of any repairs or redecorations that the tenant has a responsibility to put right. They will also complete an inspection form and discuss this with the Maintenance Officer so that they can jointly decide if it is possible to re-let the property with no void period. The Maintenance Officer will then carry out a further inspection no later than on the day that the property becomes vacant and will complete a Property Inspection Checklist.

If the Housing Officer and Maintenance Officer are satisfied that the outgoing tenant has left the property in good decorative order (see below for definition) and the property is clean then they will be provided with a £20.00 voucher. In accordance with the Compensation Policy, if the tenant owes money to the Association then £20.00 will be deducted from the debt.

It will not be possible to re-let all properties with no void period and where it is identified that repairs are of a substantial nature or where minor repairs could pose a threat to the tenants' health and safety, works must be completed prior to tenancy commencement. In these cases staff must work to the following timescales;

Minor Repairs – must be completed within 5 Calendar Days

Substantial Repairs (eg, redecoration, replacement of kitchen etc) – must be completed within 4 calendar weeks.

Any instance of these timescales not being met must be explained in writing to the Housing and Support Manager.

ELEMENTS OF THE LETTABLE STANDARD

Tenants can expect their property to meet the following criteria;

Kitchens

As a minimum we will provide;

- An adequate water supply
- A stainless steel sink with drainer
- Undamaged worktops that can be easily cleaned
- At least two double sockets in addition to a supply for an electric cooker
- Space for a standard upright cooker, plus electric connection (where possible a connection for a gas cooker will also be provided)
- A minimum of two double base units and two wall units for storage, these units to be undamaged
- A waterproof, hygienic and undamaged floor covering
- Connections for a washing machine

Bathrooms

As a minimum we will provide;

- An adequate water supply
- A serviceable and clean wc, wash basin and bath or shower
- Baths and showers will have serviceable seals surrounding joins to walls
- A minimum of 2 tile courses will surround any bath.
- Showers will have full height tiled wall surrounds within the operational area and will have a shower curtain or screen.
- Floor coverings will be moisture resistant, hygienic and undamaged
- Any additional wc within the property must have a wash hand basin within that room.

Heating

Provision of either gas central heating or electric storage heaters.

The living room and bathroom must have a fixed heating appliance (eg radiator or storage heater).

If the property is reliant on electric storage heaters on a standard tariff then the electricity meter

will be upgraded if necessary to allow for the use of Economy 7 charging rates.

Gas Installations

A gas safety inspection certificate will be issued at the time the property is empty. Under no circumstances will the property be re-let with a live gas supply until the certificate is issued.

If the gas has been capped off a gas safety inspection must be timed to co-incide with the reinstatement of the supply.

Electrical Installations

An electrical certificate will be issued at the time the property is empty if an existing certificate is more than 5 years old.

An electrical certificate will also be issued if upon completing the void inspection there is apparent any tampering, visually identified electrical repairs, vandalism or DIY electrical alterations.

Any remedial works will be carried out to ensure that the property meets current minimum

electrical legal standards.

Ventilation

A combination of openable windows and trickle ventilation should be provided, especially in rooms where condensation is more likely to form (bathrooms, kitchens and bedrooms).

An extractor fan will be provided in kitchens or bathrooms if there are no openable windows).

Windows

Internal glazing will be checked to ensure that it meets current safety legislation standards. Safety restrictors will be required if due to the location of any window opening there is a risk of falling by children or vulnerable persons.

Stairs

Stairs and staircases should be well lit with safe and secure balustrades or handrails along the whole length.

Security

Each external door will have a sturdy door frame, capable of withstanding forced entry. Where possible a mortice lock will be fitted. If the type of door is not suitable for a mortice lock then the strongest lock possible for that type of door will be fitted.

Roof void, loft access and insulation

There will be a minimum 100mm loft insulation for properties with full gas central heating, and 200mm thickness for properties with electric storage heaters.

Tenants should be informed that roof spaces are not to be accessed or used for storage of any kind.

Internal Decorations

All internal exposed wall or ceiling surfaces and exposed woodwork or ironwork should be in good decorative order.

Good decorative order is assessed according to the following classification.

- Wallpapered surfaces are not torn or of poor quality
- Unpapered surfaces have a smooth plaster finish
- Surfaces are free from marks, graffiti, mould growth, tacks/nails and adhesive products (eg blu tack)
- Walls, ceilings and woodwork are not unacceptable colours (eg very dark colours)

If a property fails to meet this standard, staff are authorised to issue a decorating allowance. See below for guidance.

Category Description Value of Decorating

Allowance

Good As described above Nil

Average Up to 25% of room does not meet 'Good' description £15 per small room (kitchen, bathroom, hallway, small bedroom). £25 per large room (living room, large bedroom).

Below Average Over 25% and up to 50% of room does not meet 'Good' description £35 per small room (kitchen, bathroom, hallway, small bedroom). £50 per large room (living room, large bedroom).

Poor Over 50% and up to 75% of room does not meet 'Good' description. £50 per small room (kitchen, bathroom, hallway, small bedroom). £75 per large room (living room, large bedroom)

Requires complete redecoration. 100% of room does not meet 'Good' description. £70 per small room (kitchen, bathroom, hallway, small bedroom). £100 per large room (living room, large bedroom).

Where up to 75% of the property requires redecoration, the Association would normally expect the tenant to carry out this work themselves. This assumes that they are able to carry out the work or can obtain assistance from relatives or friends or have access to voluntary services. If a tenant is not able to carry out the work the Housing and Support Manager can authorise the use of contractors.

Where a property requires complete redecoration, the Association would normally expect to arrange to have the work carried out by a contractor. However, if the tenant is willing and able to carry out the work they should be given the opportunity.

In the case of 75% or complete redecoration, half the decorating allowance should be given as Decorating Vouchers in advance and half as cash or cheque once an inspection has been carried out by the Maintenance Officer to ensure the work is progressing satisfactorily. Where the Association has responsibility for redecorating the property as part of our cyclical maintenance programme, it may not always be possible to meet this part of the Lettable Standard. In these cases the property must meet the description for Average standard or redecoration must be scheduled to take place within a 2 year period. All other aspects of the lettable standard must be applied.

Flooring

Flooring should be level and ready for covering. Floorboards will not be loose and any nail heads will be flush to the floor level. All carpeted floor coverings will be removed from the property unless they are clearly in a good condition and the new tenant wishes to take responsibility for them.

Infestation

The property will be free from any form of pest infestation. Suitable proprietary products will be used to remove any infestation whilst the property is empty.

Cleanliness

Each property will meet the following standard of cleanliness:

- Sanitary fittings will be clean and free from staining or markings
- Kitchen worktops and cupboards will be clean and free from markings
- Sealant to bathroom and kitchens will be clean and free from mould growth
- There will be no waste or rubbish within the property (or in the garden or outbuildings)

Gardens and Driveways

Will be free from waste and rubbish.

The garden must not be so overgrown that it could not be possible to cultivate it with a reasonable amount of labour or basic gardening equipment.

Storage sheds, greenhouses and outbuildings must be free from waste and rubbish and be secure, safe and serviceable. If not they must be removed from site or replaced.

In family accommodation any ponds will be filled in or removed.

Aids and Adaptations

Where a property has been fitted with aids or adaptations, every effort must be made to allocate to a tenant who can benefit from these. The aid or adaptation must be in good condition.

Any warden call equipment will be fully checked during the void inspection.

INCOMING TENANTS

Tenants will receive a leaflet at the commencement of their tenancy summarising this Standard. We will provide them with the following:

- Two full sets of keys to each lockable door, storage cupboard or shed
- At least three window lock keys if these are fitted to the property
- A copy of the gas safety certificate
- A list of any repairs that are to be completed once they move in
- Details of the estimated date of implementation of any major improvements planned for their property. Useful information specific to their property, the estate or scheme and local area.

We will also:

- Provide energy efficient lightbulbs for each light fitting
- Leave a welcome card in the property and a questionnaire asking how they found the condition of the property
- Carry out a follow up visit 4-6 weeks after the commencement of the tenancy to ensure that there are no outstanding issues

MONITORING THE STANDARD

We will monitor our performance against this standard by:

- Ensuring that Senior Management staff carry out inspections of random selection Properties
- Asking other tenants to inspect a random selection of properties (for which a £10.00 payment will be made).

