



Responsive Repairs and Void Maintenance Policy

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Manual Version Control

Version	Date	
1.0	October 2016	Responsive Repairs and Void Maintenance Policy
2.0	October 2019	Revised
3.0	May 2023	Full Review
3.1	July 2023	Clarification on Right to Repair as discussed at July 23 Board meeting

1.0 Policy Statement

Pickering and Ferens Homes (PFH) is committed to delivering a high-quality, modern, effective and efficient repairs and maintenance (R&M) service. We are committed to ensuring that the homes we provide are comfortable, well maintained and safe for people to live in.

The principle purpose of this policy is to clearly set out PFHs approach to delivering the requirements of the R&M service, ensuring that all staff and residents are aware.

PFH has a responsibility to ensure that all our properties are safe, functional and maintained to a high standard, supplied with water, power, heat and light. PFH is committed to safeguarding the health, safety and wellbeing of everybody living, working or visiting our buildings, and to protecting our property, fixtures and fittings.

Residents

Our residents rightly expect us to deliver high standards of customer care, tailoring our services to their individual requirements. We gather resident and property insight data to help us to do this and regularly appraise resident needs and whether we are meeting and exceeding these requirements. We recognise that, along with our resident age profile, there are differing levels of vulnerability and disabilities that we need to cater for, and our repair priorities may be amended depending on those individual and general needs.

Repairs, Maintenance and Void Definitions

The association is committed to repairing and maintaining it's housing to a high standard. For the purpose of this Policy, R&M is defined as:

'Work that is carried out to fix or maintain a property in response to a resident request, typically carried out on a day-to-day basis and hasn't been planned in as part of a forecasted maintenance programme'

For the purpose of this Policy, a Void is defined as:

'A property that is empty property with no licensee associated with it, a property will be void from the time the licence ends, to when a new one begins'

2.0 Aim & Purpose of Policy

The aim of this Policy is to ensure the effective maintenance and management of properties that are occupied and empty in relative to reactive maintenance.

This policy applies to all properties where PFH has a responsibility for management and maintenance.

PFH has separate but associated policies relating to compliance, planned & cyclical works, inspections, DMC, aids and adaptations and stock condition. These functions are therefore out of the scope of this policy.

3.0 Requirements

The following legislation and regulations place a responsibility on PFH to ensure the safety of its residents in relation to repairs and voids:

- Decent Homes Standard (Homes Standard – RSH)
- The Homes (Fit for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- The Landlord and Tenant Act (1985) (amended by above)
- Housing Act 1996
- Housing Health & Rating System (HHSRS)
- Social Housing (Regulation) Bill
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Equality Act 2010
- The Energy Performance of Buildings (Certificates and Inspections) (England and Wales) Regulations 2007
- Building Regulations

4.0 Delivery

We will ensure the delivery of this Policy through a number of measures, including:

- Using a range of contractors, procured competitively and where possible, locally, to carry out works
- Utilising a housing management system for recording, ordering and tracking R&M jobs
- Pre and post inspecting jobs where required
- Ensuring colleagues and residents understand their roles and responsibilities under the Policy, including rechargeable repairs
- Enabling residents to report and track repairs accessibly;
 - In person
 - Via telephone (including out of normal working hours)
 - Via letter
 - Self service via a resident portal
- Co-designed service standards with residents
- Utilising an appointment based system where possible, ensuring residents are kept up to date with progress and proactive contact if an appointment needs to be changed
- Monitoring and reporting performance against timescales, job completion and resident satisfaction
- A Contractor's Code of Conduct

Contractors - we will ensure all our Contractors are fully qualified and have appropriate and up to date registrations to undertake the work on our Residents' homes. We will work with them to ensure they comply with Health and Safety requirements, our repair priorities, contract terms and that work is carried out to a high standard. Feedback from customer surveys will be provided to Contractors through monthly contractor meetings.

Appointments - Through our contractors, repairs may be appointed at a time that is convenient to the resident, usually the provision of an AM or PM appointment, Monday to Friday. By request, we are able to provide some repair appointments on a Saturday morning. There may be occasions where our Contractor is in the locality and have capacity to undertake a repair earlier than agreed appointment. In these circumstances, the Contractor may call ahead, to offer the earlier appointment, the resident may reject the offer of an earlier appointment and suffer no detriment to the service they receive. In these circumstances, the Contractor will attend at the agreed appointment time to complete the job. We will aim to develop a system whereby appointments are confirmed back to a resident via a communication method of their preference, once agreed with the contractor, this will be developed in accordance with our new housing management system.

First Time Fix – We will aim to limit the number of visits and inconvenience to the resident by resolving repairs at the first visit. This is not always possible, but we will monitor the performance of our Contractors by using resident perception and feedback as to whether repairs are completed in one visit.

Utility Services - We will reconnect electricity, water and gas supply at the end of each day wherever possible and check these supplies are working properly

Variations – Contractors are permitted to amend work orders within set limits in order to facilitate a 'right first time' approach to R&M. These limits are currently set at up to £250. This means that a contractor is permitted to alter the works requested of them on any repair where the value of the replacement works are of a similar nature and total less than £250. An example would be where a contractor was sent to repair a dripping tap and identify that a replacement is needed, the contractor is permitted to replace the taps and vary the works order to match the works that were completed. Variations are reviewed internally and value of works is updated in systems accordingly to maintain an audit trail.

Value for Money – As our largest area of spend, we recognise that the R&M service is an opportunity to demonstrate value for money, balanced with the need to provide an excellent, efficient, customer focussed and cost-effective service. We will do this by:

- Procurement of competitive longer-term contracts to deliver our responsive repairs and void service, ensuring local labour targets and resident requirements are embedded into the process.
- Exploring and utilising modern methods of procurement that demonstrate VFM
- Utilising the housing management system to manage the works ordering process and investing in upgrades where a business case demonstrates the need
- Benchmarking our costs with peer organisations
- Carrying out regular resident satisfaction surveys across responsive, voids and planned maintenance works and use the feedback to improve the service.
- Continuing to involve our residents in the procurement processes
- Regular auditing of performance by external auditors

Right To Repair – As an Almshouse charity that grants occupation by virtue of a licence, PFH is not bound by the statutory requirements of the Right To Repair. However, PFH has decided to operate within the framework of the Right To Repair and details are set out in our Compensation Policy.

There are other entitlements that Residents may be able to claim and include:

- Right to Improve – residents are allowed to improve their home, but all requests to carry out this work must be in writing and authorised by PFH prior to the works being carried out, in accordance with their License. Examples of these improvements are fitting a new kitchen, bathroom and central heating system. Once the improvements have been made PFH will not be responsible for replacing, renewing or maintaining any fitting or improvement.
- Right to Compensation – Residents may be entitled to compensation for some improvements they make to their home. PFH have a separate compensation policy which details its position on Right to Compensation for improvements. The Rights to Compensation for Improvements relates to a statutory obligation which PFH are exempt from in its nature as an Almshouse charity.

Repair priorities and response times

Category	Timescale	Definition	Examples
Emergency	Within 24 hours	Where there is a potential danger to the health or risk to the safety of a person, or serious damage to the building.	Unlawful entry, non-containable leaks to pipes, vandalism that causes a security threat, blocked drains, gas leaks, total loss of electrical power, total loss of heating or hot water. Emergency repairs may involve just making safe rather than full repairs and returning to complete repairs during normal operating hours.
Urgent	Within 7 calendar days	Where people or properties are not at an immediate health and	Leaks to pipes that can be contained, loss of electric lighting (where alternative

	(excluding public holidays)	safety risk but would cause a major nuisance, discomfort or inconvenience to the resident	lighting is available), faults to smoke alarms, blocked sink, bath or wash basin
Routine	Within 28 calendar days (excluding public holidays)	Minor repairs which cause no serious inconvenience and without serious detriment to the property	Blocked gutter, sticking internal door, glow bulbs to electric fires, dripping taps, plastering works
Planned Responsive	On a case by case basis aiming for completion within 3 months	Works that do not pose a risk to health, safety or security and specific specialist materials may be required	Fencing works, gutter replacements, roofing work

PFH responsibilities and customer responsibilities

A comprehensive list of responsibilities of PFH and its residents is attached at Appendix A.

If a recharge is necessary, we will record evidence of the case, including photographs and advise residents if there will be a charge for any repairs and give an estimate of the cost. We will also provide this in writing. Where possible, we will give the resident the opportunity to undertake/commission the work themselves unless there are significant health and safety implications. We will inspect and sign off any works the resident has completed or commissioned themselves.

Void Properties

We aim to relet our empty properties as quickly as possible in order to make sure applicants who need rehousing wait as short a time as possible, and we maximise income through maintenance contributions (rent).

We have a minimal lettable standard for our properties, that has been co-created with residents and applicants. We, or our Contractors will always inspect an empty property and schedule works to bring the property up to the lettable standard. In doing so, we will be mindful of:

- Stock condition, achieving the Decent Homes Standard and prospective planned works. Any capital improvements to components undertaken will be logged on our Asset Management system
- The needs of the incoming resident, offering them choice if appropriate and the timeline allows

- The property history, utilising this to ensure we implement works to minimise occurrences of damp, mould and condensation and maximise energy and thermal efficiency where appropriate

Subject to the agreement of the incoming resident, there may be occasions where we undertake void works after the resident has moved in. These will be minor works of a non-urgent or disruptive nature and will be complete by the After Care Stage, approximately 6 weeks after they sign up.

5.0 Our Commitment to Equalities

PFH seeks to ensure that their actions do not lead to unlawful discrimination. Deliberate acts of discrimination, including victimisation, harassment, instruction or pressure to discriminate, will result in disciplinary actions and/or termination of contracts with external agents.

We can provide access to interpreters for minority languages including sign language, and we can arrange written material in large print, Braille and first languages where necessary.

PFH will aim to ensure that no individual or group is treated less favourably on the grounds of age, disability, gender, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion and belief, sex and sexual orientation. We aim to recognise the needs of individuals and treat each person through the complaints process with dignity and respect.

We will consider the individual needs of residents who may require additional support and make reasonable adjustments in line with the Equality Act 2010 and in accordance with our EDI Policy.

We will work with our contractors to ensure that any resident who feels uncomfortable with male only operatives, either can opt to have a female operative, or a female accompanying the operative

6.0 Performance Monitoring and Reporting

There is a robust procedure in place for monitoring compliance with the Repairs, Maintenance and Voids Policy.

Key performance indicator (KPI) measurements are in place, regularly reviewed and reported to senior management, other relevant staff, resident committees and the Board.

Service standards have been co-designed and agreed with residents, these will be communicated to residents, adhered to, and reported against.

7.0 Responsibilities within this Policy

PFH Board, Chief Executive & Leadership Team

The Board, Chief Executive and SLT have ultimate accountability in ensuring the policy is delivered and will approve any major amendments or revisions of PFH's Repairs Maintenance and Voids Policy.

Home Services Director

Responsibility for implementation of the Repairs Maintenance and Voids Policy falls to the Home Services Director.

Property & Compliance Manager

The Reactive Repairs and Voids procedure will be managed by the Property & Compliance Manager. Ensure that the procedure is being followed by all staff within PFH and contractors alike.

Undertake regular reviews of the Repairs Maintenance and Voids Policy, ensuring compliance with current legislation and regulatory requirements.

Surveyors

Responsible for the timely inspection and ordering of associated work, updating the housing and asset management systems, liaising with residents and contractors alike, to ensure the smooth delivery of reactive and void services.

Customer Services & Property Admin

Receiving and managing repair requests at the first point of contact, raising and tracking orders and liaising with contractors, surveyors, residents and others to ensure the smooth delivery of the service. Updating of systems and communicating with residents.

Competent Contractors

Responsible for the operational delivery of works in association with repairs, maintenance and voids

Appendix A – PFH and Resident Responsibilities

PFH responsibilities	Resident Responsibilities
Electric, Gas and Water Installations and appliances	Replacement of light bulbs (not fluorescent or bulbs in sealed fittings). Additional electric sockets requirements. Venting kit for tumble driers.
Cooker points that are existing	Alternative cooker point than existing
Drains, Gutters and Pipework including unblocking of drains/ sinks.	Blocked drains or sinks that are caused by the resident. Plumbing for washing machines or dishwashers
Internal Structure, Plasterwork, walls, doors wall tiling, ceiling and floor	Laminate floor coverings when fitted by residents. Internal decoration, except when disturbed during major repairs. Adjusting internal doors due to new carpet installation except where fire doors are fitted.
External fabric of building including windows, doors, brickwork, roofs and chimneys	External structures erected by the resident, e.g. shed, greenhouse. Draught excluders (provided doors and windows fit properly)
Kitchen and bathroom general wear and tear (including replacement toilet seats where damaged through wear and tear) .	Provision of plugs and chains to sinks and bath
Re-glazing generally or if as a result of vandalism if a crime number is provided.	Resident breakages
Front and Rear Door locks	Replacement lock and/or keys if lost to front doors, rear door.. All replacement locks to sheds Additional keys
Boundary walls, gates and Fencing – repairs to existing only	Garden pond maintenance and filling in of same
Paths to property	
Hardstandings provided by PFH	Hardstandings provided by the customer
Clothes posts if fitted	Line to clothes posts
Rotary driers to communal areas	Rotary driers
External painting (as part of cyclical works)	
Sheds that are owned by PFH	sheds owned by/gifted to by Residents
Communal TV Aerials and satellite dishes	Individual aerials and satellite dishes
Door entry systems for shared areas	
Communal stairwells, lighting and general area maintenance	
Rodent infestation (internal to property), including preventing access to rodents and pests (ie blocking up entry points)	Treatment of bees, wasps, flies & ants. Pests external to property
Garden walls if built by us	

Pathways and steps which provide main access to the front of and back door of the property	
Communal grounds and paths	

This list is not exhaustive.