



North Devon Homes

Responsive Repairs Policy

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1. Purpose

This policy has been produced to ensure an effective and efficient delivery of the responsive repairs services that meets customers' needs, helps to preserve North Devon Homes' ('NDH') housing stock for future customers and provides value for money services.

NDH's aim is to improve our housing through building quality, affordable homes; providing a high standard of safety and security; combined with the delivery of a modern and efficient repairs and maintenance service, all contributing to overall customer satisfaction.

2. Principles

The following principles will apply to this policy:

- It will be open, fair and transparent
- It will reflect the current standards of operation and will be reviewed whenever industry standards, legislation or guidelines change
- It will promote consistency in the approach to the repairs and maintenance services
- It will be used to provide a framework to inform and train staff, customers and board members on how response repairs are managed in the company
- It will be realistic, achievable and provide value for money
- It will support the corporate vision, values, objectives and service standards.

3. Review

We will review this policy at least once every three years or immediately following any relevant change to government policy, regulation or legislation. This will ensure that it continues to operate within best practice, achieve measurable results, and achieve continuous service improvement.

The Head of Asset Management will be responsible for ensuring that policy reviews are undertaken and that appropriate consultation takes place.

4. Responsibility

The Executive Team will approve this policy under delegated authority from the Board. The Head of Asset Management will be responsible for ensuring that this policy is communicated and implemented.

Detailed procedures will be developed and maintained by the Response Repairs Manager in line with this policy to provide further guidance during delivery of the policy.

The Head of Asset Management is responsible for ensuring that staff training is provided and that staff understand the wider issues surrounding this policy, its applications and the procedure.

5. Scope

- 5.1 This policy has been produced to ensure an effective and efficient delivery of NDH responsive repairs services.
- 5.2 To provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, customers, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time
- 5.3 To meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.

6. Policy Statement

- 6.1 Under S11 of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1985, our Landlord Responsibilities are :

To keep in repair the structure and exterior of the dwelling-house (including drains, gutters and external pipes). To keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for the supply of water, gas and electricity and for sanitation (including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences, but not other fixtures, fittings and appliances for making use of the supply of water, gas or electricity)

To keep in repair and proper working order the installations in the dwelling-house for space heating and heating water.

Under the Housing Act 2004 our obligations are to identify if Category 1 and 2 hazards exist within our homes and the Act allows for remedy and enforcement action if needed.

To meet the expectations of the Economic and Consumer Standards, particularly in respect to the Home Standard for Repairs and Maintenance:

Registered providers shall ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include: responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.

Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant organizations to provide an adaptations service that meets customers' needs.

A response repair is defined as an item of minor or routine maintenance undertaken in response to a request from a customer. They are carried out on an ad-hoc basis as the need arises and cannot be deferred for inclusion in planned or cyclical maintenance programmes.

We will diagnose repairs as they are reported to us at any time of day or night and prioritise these according to the following categories:

Responsive maintenance categories

- Emergency up to 4 or 24 hours response (including out of hours)
- Urgent 5 working days
- Routine 20 working days

Each repair will be assessed against all criteria including health and safety, vulnerability and security.

Repair requests that fall outside the remit of Response repairs, for instance they require substantial remedial works that will take more than 2 working days to complete, specialist materials are required or a proprietary access platform is required, will be treated as a Minor Works repair within a 120 day timescale.

NDH will accept repair requests at any time by a variety of means including:

- Telephone (Customer Care Team, H2H Desk and emergency out of hours numbers)
- In writing
- In person
- E-mail
- Via the website

Repair requests will be raised on CX and either a Works Order will be raised and issued to the appropriate Contractor, or an Inspection request will be raised for a Surveyor to attend and assess and diagnose the repair as appropriate.

We will only carry out repairs that fall under our responsibility, details of which are provided in the Customers Handbook.

We will not carry out repairs for leaseholders or shared ownership, unless the terms of the lease expressly show that it is our responsibility; such as with the fabric of the building or communal areas.

Repairs will be sympathetic to the original construction, geographic location and support a fabric first approach to upgrades.

Missed appointments can cost time and money for both the customer and NDH.

Where NDH or a framework contractor fails to turn up then any compensation will be determined by the nature of the contract and agreed by the Response Repairs Manager.

Where a customer misses a contractor appointment, NDH may send a warning letter to alert the customer that for each further appointment missed a charge may be incurred equal to the charge that NDH receives from the contractor as defined

Recharges for work not considered our responsibility or beyond normal wear and tear e.g. neglect, misuse or vandalism will be applied in accordance with the Recharge Policy. Where possible the Customer will be advised in advance of the anticipated cost of the recharge.

6.2 Customer Responsibilities:

Customers are responsible for keeping their homes in reasonable condition and attempting to solve minor problems. You may be charged for repairs or damage that do not count as fair wear and tear, eg damage due to natural wear or aging.

The Customers Handbook identifies the items that Customers are expected to take responsibility for.

Customers are also encouraged to insure the contents of their home as damage to personal effects remains their responsibility e.g in the event of a burst water pipe.

6.3 Right to Repair

NDH operates a 'Right to Repair' scheme as set out under the terms of the Housing Act 2004.

The Right to Repair Scheme enables customers to have urgent, minor repairs which affect health or safety completed quickly at no cost to them. The Scheme also provides for customers to be compensated where such repairs have not been completed within a prescribed period. Details of the suggested list of repairs can be found in the Customers Handbook and compensation details in the Compensation Policy

6.4 Performance Measures

NDH will monitor the performance of the repairs service with a view to benchmarking across the housing sector to test that it is meeting standards with regards to quality and value for money. Performance Indicators recorded will comply with sector wide standards so that we are able to compare ourselves.

Examples of current repairs measures are:

- percentage of repairs completed within the target date for all repair priorities
- Levels of customer satisfaction with the repairs service.
- Number of repairs that are successfully completed on the first visit on all repairs
- Satisfaction with how the repair enquiry was handled

NDH will also audit a percentage of repair work (ordinarily around 10% of works completed) using a Works Auditor. These will include:

- all works exceeding £500
- works for customers who have raised a complaint
- unusual works or bespoke works
- a random sample across all works

6.5 Contractors' Code of Conduct

All contractors working in customers' homes will be required to accept and adhere to the terms of NDH's Contractors Code of Conduct, a copy of which is available in the Handbook and on our website.

6.6 Right to Buy or Acquire Repairs

The Company's properties are subject to potential Right to Buy / Right to Acquire (RTB/RTA) applications. NDH is obliged to be clear about the types of repairs that are essential to properties that are subject to these provisions details of which are provided in the Repairs Handbook.

7. Consultation

NDH will consult customers, the Customer Board Partnership and other groups in relation to the repairs service. This could include mystery shopping, reviewing our publications and communications with customers and helping us to shape our repairs offer.

Some of the consultation will be through established customer groups, but we will also endeavour to widen out the numbers of customer engaged through the use of social media, surveys and focus groups.

Date	Consultation methodology Responsive repairs Group	Challenge / impact / result
30-06-2010	Responsive repairs group – appointments system	To agree a new system with the customers
25-08-2010	Responsive repairs group - TSA framework, performance monitoring and customer training	To provide customers with the right training and guidelines to inform service delivery and challenge performance
25-08-2010	Group debate on customer recharges	To ensure understanding and challenge on issues
27-10-2010	Performance Monitoring information	To ensure compliance with standards
17-03-2011	Repair responsibilities and priorities	To seek agreement on prioritising repairs for priority/ and legal responsibilities
12-05-2011	Draft policy to Customer Group	Customer challenge
27-05-2011	Starfish Group	To challenge the application of the policy against the range of protected characteristics.
July 2019	Scrutiny Panel	Customer review of policy
August 2019	Fresh Ideas Focus Group	Development of key points into policy guidance for customers and feedback into policy.
October 2019	Customer Board Partnership meeting	To finalise Policy and discuss age limit for responsible person at home overseeing repair

8. Equality Impact Assessment

This policy will be applied fairly and consistently to all customers of NDH and in compliance with the Single Equality Act 2010 which recognizes the “protected characteristics” as; gender, transgender, race, marital status, pregnancy and maternity, ethnic origin, nationality, disability, sexuality, age, religion and belief.

To this end an Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on this policy and is attached as Appendix A.

We undertake to produce this document or parts of it on request in other languages or formats such as large print to ensure that everyone is able to access the policy.

Language Line provides all corporate translation services and they may be contacted on 0800 169 2879.

We are committed to the principles of fairness and respect at NDH and therefore seek to embed statutory guidance and policy relating to Equality and Diversity in to all activities.

8.1 Aims of the Policy being assessed

This policy sets out the responsibilities and obligations of North Devon Homes in delivering this service. The policy identifies key areas of service delivery and sets out how they will be managed and delivered to ensure a consistent approach for all customers.

This policy aims to ensure an effective and efficient delivery of the service that meets today's customers' needs, helps to preserve NDH's housing stock for future customers and provides value for money services.

8.2 Identify potential impact on each of the diversity “groups” by considering the following questions (the list is not exhaustive but an indication of the sort of questions assessors should think about):

Strand	No impact	Negative impact	Positive impact	Comments / evidence
Race			√	The policy allows for the manager to increase the prioritisation of the repair category if there are any issues of harassment involved in the repair
Disability			√	As above based on any issues of vulnerability
Gender	√			
Gender Reassignment			√	There may be a need to reprioritise a repair to provide security in cases of harassment
Sexual orientation	√			
Religion or belief	√			
Age			√	As above based on any issues of vulnerability
Rural issues	√			
Social Inclusion issues	√			
Pregnancy and maternity	√			
Marriage and civil partnership	√			

8.3 Does the Policy promote equality of opportunity?

All customers are entitled to the same service and we offer every customer the opportunity to feedback on the service via a telephone survey, or an on line survey, as well as the range of opportunities provided for involvement of the development of this policy

8.6 If “adverse impact” identified in table (4) above is it:

Legal (i.e not discriminatory)
NO

What is the level of impact?

8.7 Full EIA (or if you decide full EIA is not necessary but some changes should be considered)

The Policy will be subject to a review by the Customer Board Partnership to ensure there are no adverse outcomes as a result of the application of this policy. All of the protected characteristics listed above will be considered during debate.

8.8 If actions/suggestions for improvement have been suggested, what should the positive outcome be for North Devon Homes’ customers and stakeholders?

The Customer Board Partnership customer group has been provided with training, information and guidelines on all aspects of the legal responsibilities associated with landlord repair obligations. They have agreed reprioritisation of a repair based on customers vulnerability or protected characteristic. The Responsive Repairs Manager is responsible for reprioritising repairs.

Next review date:	Responsible Officer
February 2024	Head of Asset Management
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