



# Rural Stirling

Housing Association



Quality property  
management services

## GROUP REACTIVE MAINTENANCE POLICY

<b>Rural Stirling Housing Association, Stirling Road, Doune, FK16 6AA. Registered as a Scottish Charity No. SC037849</b>	
<b>Policy Name</b>	<b>Group Reactive Maintenance Policy</b>
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<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	Yes



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## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 We place a high importance on providing a quality reactive repairs service and ensuring that our properties are well maintained and kept in good and safe repair, both for the benefit of existing tenants and to maximise the long-term life of each property. The Association also understands the high importance that tenants place on this service.
- 1.2 This policy operates in conjunction with a range of strategies, policies and other guidance, in particular, the Asset Management Strategy, the Procurement Policy and the Relet Standard.
- 1.3 Reactive repairs or day to day repairs are defined as all repairs reported by a tenant, a member of staff, or identified during a void inspection. They are carried out on an ad-hoc basis and cannot be left to the next cycle of programmed or planned maintenance without posing a threat to the safety, health and security of the tenant, the deterioration of the building or the landlord's repair obligations. Repairs are categorised<sup>44</sup> according to their urgency and are carried out by one of the Association's Repairs Service contractors within set response times.
- 1.4 Reactive repairs are funded from the annual Reactive Maintenance & Voids budgets, which is financed from rental income.

## **2.0 Purpose**

- 2.1 In implementing this policy our objectives will be to:
  - provide a first class reactive repairs service (including an out of hours service for emergency repairs) that is sensitive to the needs and high standards expected by tenants;
  - comply at all times with all current legal responsibilities and codes of good practice;
  - comply with contractual obligations to tenants, occupiers and sharing owners;
  - provide a prompt and efficient service that aims to get repairs completed in one visit wherever possible;
  - provide a cost-effective service within overall financial strategies and managed within approved budgets to provide a value for money service to tenants;
  - minimise<sup>44</sup> void rent loss through well managed void works within targeted re-let times;
  - achieve high standards of customer care and satisfaction by monitoring our contractors' performance regularly;

- provide opportunities for tenants to influence the delivery of the reactive repairs service including through enabling tenants to comment on every repair undertaken; and
- ensure that tenants are given clear information on all aspects of the service, levels of performance and how they compare with other landlords.

### **3.0 Equality & Diversity Statement (Group Statement)**

- 3.1 We will ensure that this policy is applied fairly and consistently. In implementing this policy, we will not directly or indirectly discriminate against any person or group of people because of their race, religion or belief, gender, disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other grounds. Our commitment to equality and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or other personal attributes.

This policy and any other Rural Stirling Group (RSG) publication is available in other formats e.g., other languages, Braille, large print, audio.

### **4.0 SHR Regulatory Standards**

- 4.1 The SHR's regulatory framework sets out Regulatory Standards of Governance and Financial Management to be achieved by all Registered Social Landlords (RSLs). The Board accepts that it is responsible for ensuring that the Association complies with these standards. The standards of direct relevance to this policy are noted below:

1. *The Governing Body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users*
2. *The RSL is open and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.*
5. *The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity*

### **5.0 Responsibilities**

- 5.1 We will comply at all times with current legal and regulatory responsibilities and codes of good practice. **Appendix 1** provides a summary of the relevant legislation, regulations and guidance.
- 5.2 We will comply at all times with contractual obligations to tenants and other occupiers as set out in the Scottish Secure Tenancy agreement (SST) between tenant / occupant and the Association.

- 5.3 We will comply with the more limited contractual obligations to sharing owners.
- 5.4 We will operate the Right to Repair in line with legislative requirements and repairs which fall under this category will be responded to within the timescale allowed by the law.
- 5.5 Tenants have specific responsibilities regarding repairs and maintenance of their home, common parts and surrounding environment and these are outlined in the SST agreement and the tenant handbook.
- 5.6 Tenants will be expected to organise and pay for repairs due to carelessness, neglect, accident or deliberate damage by them or a member of their household or a visitor. Discretion may be exercised by staff in circumstances where the tenant has an illness, disability or is otherwise frail or where exceptional circumstances render the re-charge inappropriate or unfair.

**6.0 Reporting repairs**

- 6.1 We will strive to ensure that all tenants are given fair and equal access to the reactive repairs service in accordance with our equal opportunities policy and that we identify and respond to all customers’ needs.
- 6.2 We will ensure that procedures for reporting reactive repairs are widely publicised and that these are simple, convenient and accessible to tenants.
- 6.3 We will offer a range of accessible methods for tenants to report repairs by telephone, to staff in person, at our office, by e-mail and through the website at [www.rsha.org.uk](http://www.rsha.org.uk)
- 6.4 Outwith office hours we will enable tenants to report emergency repairs by issuing them with the emergency service telephone number. This will also be advertised through the same methods outlined in section 6.1 and on a pre-recorded telephone messaging service when the office is closed.

**7.0 Responsiveness**

7.1 The categories, definitions and response times for reactive repairs are provided in the table below.

Category	Repair	Definition	Response Time
1	Emergency	Any situation where there is an immediate danger to the tenant, structure or security of the property or a serious loss of service (e.g. fire, flood, broken window affecting	Make safe or repair within 4 hours

		security, break-in, gas escapes, no electricity, water or heating). Staff will carry out an individual risk assessment taking into consideration individual tenant's needs where there has been a loss of heating and whether it is appropriate to classify as an emergency repair during periods of warm weather.	
<b>2</b>	<b>Urgent</b>	Repairs which require prompt attention to prevent further deterioration and extended damage to property and where there is substantial inconvenience to the tenant but no immediate threat to health or the security of property (e.g. partial loss of heating/hot water/electricity/water services, minor leaks or other water ingress, urgent electrical / joinery works, and security measures, overflow running, faulty smoke detector or cistern not flushing).	Completed within 3 working days of tenant reporting.
<b>3</b>	<b>Routine</b>	Non-urgent repairs where there is no significant inconvenience to the tenant or general public (e.g. easing a door or window, loose radiator, noisy boiler, faulty extract fan broken sanitary fitting not leaking or gate/fence repairs).	Completed within 10 working days of tenant reporting.
	<b>Right to Repair</b>	This includes most emergency and urgent repairs. E.g., loss or part loss of electric / gas supply, blocked sink, external windows, doors or locks not secure.	Completed within 4 hours or 3 working days depending on the nature of the qualifying repair.

7.2 The response times will be approved by the Management Board and widely publicised using a range of methods.

7.3 We will provide a professional response to all repair enquiries and instruct repairs promptly and write to tenants, via issue of the tenant repair request & satisfaction survey form, to confirm the repair request, priority and timescale for completion, access arrangements and contractor details.

- 7.4 We will aim to ensure that we get repairs completed to a high quality in one visit and will set performance targets and monitor this through feedback received from tenants and the contractor each time a repair is completed.
- 7.5 We will aim to ensure that tenants have a choice and certainty about when repairs will be carried out by allowing access to be arranged directly between the tenant and the contractor, with either a specific appointment or a 2-hour attendance slot agreed.
- 7.6 In new build housing developments a defects liability period applies for a period of, normally, 1 year after completion of work and any contractual defects reported by tenants will be instructed for attendance by the original contractor. Tenants will be clearly advised of any variation in reporting such defects and every endeavor will be made to arrange attendance to such requests within normal response times.
- 7.7 Contractors procured in accordance with our Procurement Policy to deliver the Repairs Service will be expected to perform their duties in accordance with the terms and conditions of their contract and we will closely monitor that contractors carrying out work on our behalf follow these terms and conditions, particularly in respect of the code of conduct.

## 8.0 Information

- 8.1 We will provide tenants with a range of information on all aspects of the reactive repairs service as described in the table below.

Topic	Source
How to report a repair (including out of hours emergency service)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tenant handbook</i></li> <li>• <i>Newsletter</i></li> <li>• <i>Poster in main office</i></li> <li>• <i>Website</i></li> <li>• <i>In person by staff</i></li> <li>• <i>Out of hours emergency telephone number provided in the tenant handbook, newsletter, website and on the main office telephone voice mail message service (when office closed)</i></li> </ul>
Division of responsibility (landlord and tenant)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tenant responsibilities for the repair and maintenance of properties will be clearly detailed in the tenancy agreement, tenant handbook, website and from time to time through the newsletter and by other appropriate means.</i></li> </ul>
Response times, categories and definitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tenant handbook</i></li> <li>• <i>Newsletter</i></li> <li>• <i>Website</i></li> </ul>
Date for completion of repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Confirmed by staff when repair reported</i></li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Confirmed by contractor when contacted for access arrangements.</i></li> <li>•</li> </ul>
Right to Repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tenants advised how the scheme works by staff and specific information included on the repair works order Tenant Repair</i></li> <li>• <i>Tenant handbook</i></li> </ul>
Delay commencing and / or completing repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>In person or telephone by staff</i></li> <li>• <i>Email or letter</i></li> </ul>
Rechargeable repairs responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Tenant handbook</i></li> <li>• <i>Tenancy agreement</i></li> <li>• <i>Newsletter</i></li> </ul>
Reporting defects (New build)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Information pack for tenants of new developments</i></li> <li>• <i>Main office telephone voice mail message (activated when office closed)</i></li> </ul>
Performance reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Newsletter</i></li> <li>• <i>Website</i></li> <li>• <i>Annual report</i></li> </ul>

8.2 We will ensure that all our publications are easy to understand and also available in plain language and can be made available in different languages and formats if required.

## **9.0 Taking account of feedback**

9.1 We will encourage feedback as this is the best way of finding out what tenants want from our repairs service based on their experience and views of the service offered. This will mainly be done through a range of automated satisfaction questions sent via a text messaging service on completion of the work. Reports on satisfaction with the service will be provided to the Management Board on a quarterly basis and recorded in the Annual Performance Report. We will provide a response to all dissatisfied replies received with the service and any performance issues highlighted will be discussed immediately with the contractor and appropriate action taken where required.

9.2 All complaints concerning the reactive repairs service will be dealt with in accordance with our Complaints Handling Process.

9.3 We will also encourage tenant involvement to promote a customer centered reactive repairs service. The Tenant Forum, Tenant Consultative members and / or any representative groups established under our Tenant Participation Policy will be invited at regular intervals to comment on the standards of the service, or on specific aspects of this policy or related procedures.

9.4 The views of tenants on the overall standards of the reactive repairs service will also be obtained as part of an independent survey of tenant views carried out at regular intervals.

## 10.0 Responsibility for administration of the service

10.1 The Management Board has responsibility for setting the policy for reactive repairs.

10.2 The Management Board has responsibility for approving the overall budget for reactive and void repairs as part of the annual budget-setting process. Authorisation of expenditure on individual repair or maintenance items, within overall budgets is set out in the Standing Orders (Schedule of Delegation).

10.3 The Management Board has overall responsibility for monitoring key performance indicators for delivering the reactive repairs service. The reports set out in the table below are produced to support this ongoing process.

<b>Report</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Expenditure against budget (including repairs to void properties)	<i>Quarterly</i>
Response performance in accordance with the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) requirements	<i>Quarterly</i>
Tenant satisfaction survey results	<i>Quarterly</i>
Performance of other housing providers	<i>Quarterly</i>

10.4 The implementation of policy together with the management and administration of the reactive repairs service are delegated to the Director of Housing and Property Services.

10.5 Staff with designated responsibility for delivering the reactive repairs service will receive appropriate training to ensure that the policy objectives set out in section 2 are achieved. The internal procedures supporting this policy will be clear, comprehensive and available to all staff, to ensure a consistent approach to managing, implementing and budgeting for all aspects of the reactive repairs service.

10.6 Pre-inspections will be carried out when it is unclear what remedial action is required following a tenant's report of a repair or non-technical staff request a technical diagnosis.

10.7 A % of completed repairs will be inspected as part of our monitoring of contractors' performance. Performance targets for this will be reviewed and approved by the Management Board annually.

## **11.0 Related Documents**

This policy relates to the following documents;

- Group Equality Diversity and Human Rights Policy
- Asset Management Strategy
- Group Sustainable Procurement Policy
- Relet Standard
- RSG Complaints Handling Process

## **12.0 Review**

12.1 We will review and update this policy every three years. More regular reviews will be considered where, for example, there is a need to respond to new legislation/policy or regulatory guidance.

**LANDLORD'S REPAIRING OBLIGATIONS**

**RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND CONTRACTUAL OBLIGATIONS**

- The Housing (Scotland) Act 2014
- The Scottish Housing Quality Standard
- SFHA Raising Standards Chapter 7 - 'Maintenance'.
- Ensure properties meet the tolerable standard (Environmental Health Legislation)
- Ensure properties are free from statutory nuisance (Environmental Health Legislation)
- Owe a duty of care to Occupiers and Visitors: Occupier's Liability (Scotland) Act 1960
- Comply with Building Acts, Health & Safety and Fire Legislation
- The Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998, Regulation 36.
- Comply with Building Regulations and relevant EC, CDM, Health & Safety, Fire, HMO Regulations
- Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement and shared ownership occupancy agreement as applicable.
- The Scottish Secure Tenants (Right to Repair) Regulations.
- The Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- The IEE Wiring Regulations 17<sup>th</sup> edition.
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012.
- Control of legionella, Approved Code of Practice & Guidance [L8] – Fourth edition 2013.

**Other guidance documents used to form this policy and associated procedures:**

- Scottish Housing Regulators Charter Outcomes and Standards.
- 2 Communication;
- 3 Participation;
- 4 Quality of Housing;
- 5 Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements;
- 13 Value for Money.