

Property Management Policy

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Equality Impact Assessment		No	

Version Control

Date	Owner	Version	Reason for Change
May 25	Housing & Customer Services Manager	5.0	Review & updates following new structure & contractor procurement

Summary of Changes

Section	Change
All	Name Change from Maintenance Policy AM01 to Property Management Policy HAM02 - as joint policy across both Housing & Assets Teams
All	Updated to fit new Policy format/ template
1.1	Moved from 1.2 in V4.0 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Removal of bullet point one as this has been moved into Section 1.2 Removal of mention of 'partnering' with contractors Removal of bullet point 8 referring to tenant participation activities Additional reference to void properties as combining into one policy New reference to Tenant & Resident Safety & employee
1.2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bullet Point 1 from V4.0 expanded to make reference to specific legislation/regulations and guidance S9 from V4 on Health & Safety moved into this section
3.5 & 3.6	From V4 have been removed from this Policy and added to the Procedure
5.0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revision of target timescales following contractor procurement. Examples of the types of repairs in each category as detailed Appendix 1 removed and included in the procedure. Inclusion of void management from previous standalone policy HAM02 Removed obsolete items from examples of Cyclical Maintenance and added in landscaping Changed 'Major Reactive Repairs' to 'Complex Repairs' Revision of the definition text of Planned Maintenance New reference to damp & mould S8 from V4 added under S5 of this revised Policy. New reference made to tenant alterations/improvements.
5.12	Revision of text, exclusion of 'Partnering' section as no longer used by the association
5.14	Inclusion of CX-Feedback as tenant satisfaction communication tool
5.5	Combined Policy AM29 into this policy by adding the scope into this section.
6.0	Rewording of review section to align with other current AHA policies
Appendix 1	Review of target timescales

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1.0 Policy Statement

This policy describes our arrangements for ensuring that our homes are well maintained and kept in good and safe repair, to maximise the long-term life of each asset.

1.1 Policy Objectives

- Ensure that tenant and resident safety and employee safety is our overarching priority;
- Ensure that our repair and maintenance activities support our current business plan and comply with our sustainability, equality & diversity, and asset management plans;
- Provide an economic, efficient and effective reactive repairs service, including an out-of-hours emergency service, for all our tenants;
- Provide an economic, efficient and effective reactive repairs service within void properties;
- Establish and maintain comprehensive and systematic programmes of cyclical and planned maintenance;
- Procure contractors who are competent, financially sound, who can achieve the standards we require and allow us to provide a service which offers value for money;
- Achieve high standards of customer care and satisfaction by monitoring our contractors' performance and enabling tenants to comment on every repair undertaken;
- Ensure that all our tenants are given clear information on the division of responsibility for repair and maintenance between ourselves as landlord and themselves as tenants;
- Ensure that all internal procedures supporting this policy are clear, comprehensive and available to all staff, enabling a consistent approach to managing, implementing and budgeting all aspects of our repairs and maintenance services.

1.2 Legal & Regulatory Framework

To effectively deliver the aims and obligations of this policy Ark will ensure that good practice standards are adhered to and comply with legal duties, regulatory requirements.

This includes, but may not be limited to:

- The Housing (Scotland Act) 2001 – and specifically the guidance within the Act in relation to compensation for improvements and access rights for inspection.
- Health & Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and with all supporting legislation and statutory regulations.
- Electricity at Work Regulations 1989
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (for legionella)
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- The Energy Performance of Buildings (Scotland) Regulations 2008 – all void properties will be re-let with a valid Energy Performance Certificate in place.
- The Construction, Design and Management Regulations (CDM) – any repairs/maintenance works will comply with these regulations where applicable.
- The Equality Act 2010
- The Scottish Social Housing Charter, Outcome 4, 5 and 13 which states:
 - Quality of Housing – Social landlords manage their businesses so that:
 - tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) when they are allocated; are clean, tidy and in a good state of repair and meet the Energy Efficiency Standard for Social Housing (EESH) by December 2020.

- Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements - Social landlords manage their businesses so that:
 - tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.
- Value for money - Social landlords manage all aspects of their businesses so that:
 - Tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay”

Breaching this policy may result in disciplinary action, depending on the severity of the violation.

2.0 Scope

All staff members delivering housing and assets services are required to abide by this Policy.

3.0 Roles & Responsibilities

There is a range of standard expectations which underpin all policies. Read more about standard [role and responsibilities](#) in addition, the following specific responsibilities apply to this policy.

Managers within the Development & Customer Experience Directorate and within their area of responsibility, will:

- Be responsible for the effective implementation of this Policy and the Procedures which supports it. They must also ensure that each member within their team, through induction and e-learning, is made aware of this Policy.
- Ensure that relevant third parties are familiar with, and abide by, the terms of this Policy as necessary.

All staff within the Development & Customer Experience Directorate are required to familiarise themselves with this Policy, and associated Procedures which supports it, and

comply with its provisions, as well as undertake any training implemented in association with this policy.

4.0 Related Policies, Procedures & Documentation

- HAM02a - Reactive Repairs Procedure
- HAM02b - Void Property Procedure
- HAM02c - Right to Repair Procedure
- HAM02d - Rechargeable Repairs Procedure
- HAM02e - Tenant Alterations & Improvement Procedure
- HAM02f - Medical Aid & Adaptations
- AM01e – Cyclical Painting Procedure
- AM01g – Gas Safety Procedure
- AM01h – Electrical Safety Procedure
- AM01i – Control of Asbestos Procedure
- AM01j – Legionella and Water Hygiene Safety Procedure
- AM01k – Fire Safety Systems Equipment Procedure
- AM01l – Servicing of Specialist Equipment Procedure
- AM01n – Planned Maintenance and Major Repairs Procedure
- AM02a – Contractor Management & CDM Compliance

[Ark's Vision, Mission & Values](#)

5.0 Property Management

Within the spectrum of property management the following key areas are covered within the scope of this Policy:

- Reactive Repairs;
- Void Repairs;
- Cyclical Works;
- Complex Repairs;
- Planned Works.

All work that is undertaken within a property has the safety of the resident & tenant at the heart of work that is required.

5.1 Reactive Repairs

'Reactive Repairs' covers all the routine 'breakdown' repairs to the building fabric, or the fixtures and fittings installed by Ark.

There are three categories of reactive repairs, each with a target maximum response time as set out in the associated procedure:

- **Emergency repairs** - These repairs relate to damage that could seriously affect the health, safety or security of tenants, or the security and/or integrity of the building fabric, if the repair is not attended to immediately. They include an out-of-hours service.
- **Urgent repairs** - These are repairs that are not an emergency but at the same time cannot wait to be dealt with as a routine repair.
- **Routine repairs** - All other repairs, including addressing mould and damp issues, come into this category.

Within the categories noted above we recognise where a 'Right to Repair' is reported. Information on the scheme is contained in Tenancy Agreement's, the Tenant's Handbook and will be publicised from time to time in newsletters as well as being available on Ark's Website. Details of how we operate the scheme are contained in procedure HAM02b.

5.2 Void Repairs

It is our policy to:

- Re-let vacant (void) properties as quickly as possible,
- Minimise our costs in bringing void properties up to Ark's acceptable letting standard, and
- Minimise the loss of rental income as a result of properties being empty,

Subject to:

- Properties being in a safe/secure/clean/wind and watertight condition for occupation, and
- All offers of tenancy complying with our Allocations Policy HM01.

A 'void repair' is a repair needed to a vacant property to allow it to be re-let.

A void property may arise from a variety of reasons, as noted below, and therefore the condition that we find a property in at tenancy termination may be varied. We will endeavour to address property condition issues during an annual house visit thus ensuring that tenants are adhering to the obligations of their tenancy agreement to keep the property in a clean and tidy condition with good decoration.

Voids may arise for the following reasons:

- **Formal termination** - where a tenant gives notice in writing of their intention to end their tenancy of the property;
- **Abandonment** - where Ark has issued a legal notice as it is believed that a tenant has left the property without any notice;
- **Eviction** – where a property is legally re-posessed and the tenant removed, following the granting of a Decree by the Sheriff Court;
- **Death** – where the tenant dies and there is no-one to succeed to the tenancy as currently defined in law;
- **Internal Transfer** – where the tenant moves from one Ark property to another Ark property.

The action that we will take in each of these situations is covered by the procedures that support this policy.

As part of our efforts to minimise voids times and costs we will remind tenants, both at the start of their tenancy as well as during the settling-in visit and regularly thereafter, e.g. through the Tenant's Handbook and tenant newsletters, that they should give 28 days written notice of their intention to end their tenancy.

Tenants will also be reminded of their tenancy obligations which are to maintain the property by ensuring it is kept clean, tidy and the decoration is to an acceptable standard.

We will aim to ensure that all vacant properties are brought up to our current Lettings Standards before they are re-let. If a property does not meet the Scottish Housing Quality

Standard it will be included in a planned programme of works. A copy of the current Letting Standard is contained within the associated procedure HAM02a.

Where certain items covered by the standards are due to be improved within a reasonable time as part of current planned maintenance programmes the new tenant will be given the appropriate information.

Ark will put in place procedures to ensure that we comply with all relevant legal requirements associated with renting homes to tenants.

We aim to complete repairs within voids within the targets contained in the associated procedure, ensuring that they comply with our current Lettings Standards, so that they can be re-let as quickly as possible:

- **Basic Void** - This is one where the property is generally in a good condition throughout and all that is required is a lock change and compliance checks.
- **Standard Void** - This is one where the property needs some minor remedial works – this may include fixing some minor tenant damage.
- **Complex Void** - This is one where the property needs substantial works – this could be due to considerable tenant neglect or damage or uncovering underlying repair issues that were not identified at the pre termination inspection.

A copy of the current Letting Standard is contained within the associated procedure HAM02c.

Where certain items covered by the standards are due to be improved within a reasonable time as part of current planned maintenance programmes the new tenant will be given the appropriate information.

5.3 Cyclical Works

‘Cyclical maintenance’ refers to work that is carried out at regular intervals, in some cases to comply with statutory requirements.

Work includes, but is not limited to:

- **Cyclical painting:** The external painting of windows and doors (or washing of pvc frames), and the internal painting of communal areas in blocks of flats, carried out under a planned programme. The purpose of the programme is to ensure that all painted areas are kept in good condition.
- **Landscaping:** Ark has numerous communal/shared areas
- **Annual Servicing/Inspections**
 - **Gas heating systems:** The annual inspection and servicing of all gas heating systems installed in our properties;
 - **Specialist equipment:** Lifts/hoists/baths;
 - **Water systems:** Regular checks of water tank and taps in HMOs, and Offices at 3-month, 6-month and annual intervals as specified, for legionella and water temperature;
 - **Portal Appliance Tests** on equipment provided as part of furniture packages within shared tenancies;
 - **Fire related equipment** such as fire extinguishers/fire panels;
- **Electrical Safety Compliance:** An EICR is completed every 5 years, with Category 1 & 2 issues addressed as a priority;
- **Asbestos:** Review any risk posed by asbestos in properties, where we have identified from previous surveys that it is present.

For further information see the associated procedures as noted in Section 4 above.

5.4 Complex Repairs

‘Complex repairs’ refers to an individual repair that is routine and non-emergency but of a complex nature, it has not been foreseen and is required to bring a property up to an acceptable standard and will cost in excess of £1000. It is likely to involve multi-trades and can include jobs requiring time to dry out, removal of asbestos, jobs requiring authority from owners, insurance approval. The response target time is adjusted to reflect this.

A complex repair can be the result of, but is not limited to, the following:

- The failure of a component, or part of a component within the property;
- Mould & damp;
- Damage due to water penetration, either over a short period of time or a longer period of time;
- A planned maintenance project revealing the need for additional, unforeseen items of work;
- An inspection by an officer of a statutory agency that requires certain improvements to be carried out within a short period of time, for example improvements to fire prevention measures.

5.5 Planned Maintenance

‘Planned maintenance’ refers to the replacement of major elements, or components, of a building. It may be that:

- The component has come to the end of their useful life;
- or
- There is a need to undertake an adaptation to the property to suit the changing needs of the tenant.

It is a key part of asset management and ensures that properties remain safe, functional, and compliant with legal standards. the replacement can be predicted and planned for, and the new items are either of a similar or higher standard.

5.5.1 Capital Replacement Programmes

Planning and Scheduling of works is based on stock condition surveys, asset management systems, and component lifecycles. These are often planned over a 5–30-year investment programme and prioritised by urgency, tenant impact, and budget availability.

5.5.2 Adaptations

An Occupational Therapists Referral is required. Funding may be provided by the Scottish Government, by other funding agencies including private finance sources, or from our own reserves. Application for funding will be made on an annual basis to Scottish Government and any relevant Local Authority Grant Funders.

5.6 Alterations/Adaptations/Improvements

5.6.1 Alterations/Improvements Undertaken by Tenants

An 'alteration' is where the tenant:

- alters, removes or replaces any of the existing fabric of the building, its grounds or boundaries;
- replaces an Ark fixture or fitting with one of their own which is of similar quality or standard as the original, e.g. kitchen units or internal doors;
- permanently removes an existing Ark fixture or fitting.

An 'improvement' is where the tenant:

- replaces an Ark fixture or fitting with one of their own which is clearly of a higher standard or quality;
- installs an item where there is none at present, e.g. a new shower;
- extends the floor area of the property in any way, e.g. by adding a conservatory or a porch.

If Ark gives landlord's consent to tenants for alterations or improvements to their home, this is done without prejudice. Tenants must comply with any statutory or regulatory requirements in relation to planning consents and building warrants – further advice can be provided by the relevant local authority. Additionally, tenants must ensure that any works are carried out by a competent contractor who complies with all relevant building regulations. Guidance on tenant property alterations in social housing includes several key points:

- **Permission Required:** Tenants must obtain written consent from their landlord before making any alterations to the property. This includes changes to fixtures and fittings, internal or external decorating, and any structural modifications.
- **Reasonable Requests:** Landlords cannot unreasonably refuse requests for adaptations, auxiliary aids, or services under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2006 or the Equality Act 2010. If consent is refused, tenants can appeal to the Tribunal or Sheriff Court.
- **Compliance with Standards:** Any alterations must comply with relevant building regulations, safety standards, and the landlord's policies to ensure the work is safe and does not negatively impact the property or other residents.
- **Responsibility for Maintenance:** Tenants are responsible for maintaining any alterations they make. If the alterations cause damage or require future repairs, the tenant may be liable for the costs.
- **Reinstatement:** Upon ending the tenancy, tenants may be required to return the property to its original condition unless the landlord agrees to keep the alterations.
- **Health and Safety:** Ensuring that alterations do not compromise the health and safety of the occupants or other residents is a primary concern. This includes maintaining fire safety measures and using appropriate materials.

When a tenancy ends, we will comply with the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and consider payment of compensation for improvements that qualify. The amount of compensation to be paid will be calculated in accordance with current statutory guidance. For further details see the associated procedure as noted in Section 4 above.

5.6.2 Alterations/Adaptations undertaken by Ark on behalf of a Tenant

Subject to funding being available, we will adapt or alter individual properties to enable individuals with specific medical conditions to continue to live in them. This may have a financial impact on any of the repair/maintenance categories contained within this Policy. For further information see the associated procedure as noted in Section 4 above.

5.7 Rechargeable Repairs

Where repair work is required due to negligence or vandalism by the tenant, a member of their household or a visitor to their property, we will charge the costs of the repair to the tenant. For further information see the associated procedure as noted in Section 4 above.

5.8 Stock Condition

The current condition of building elements and finishes will be assessed through a system of regular surveys. The results will be built into the planned maintenance programme

The survey results will also feed into the 30-year Maintenance Plan, providing estimates of the costs of future maintenance requirements.

For further details of the process for identifying the work required, estimating costs, approving, managing and monitoring the annual programme of works see the associated procedure as noted in Section 4 above.

5.9 Landlord & Tenant Responsibilities

Responsibility for ensuring certain repairs are carried out is split between Ark as Landlord and individual tenants. The Tenancy Agreement and the Tenant's Handbook describe these responsibilities and are contained in the associated procedure on Rechargeable Repairs.

5.10 Consultants, Contractors & Contracts

We will work with procured contractors to deliver a contracted service across Ark's Housing Stock. The procurement of contractors will be completed via a competitive tendering process, with all tenders evaluated in regard to quality and 'value for money'.

The performance of Consultants and Contractors will be reviewed either at the conclusion of a specific project, or, in the case of reactive repairs Contractors, monthly.

For further information see the associated procedure as noted in Section 4 above.

5.11 Owners/ Occupiers

Prior to starting works we will check the Report on Title Deeds to ascertain whether any adjacent owners/occupiers will be affected by the work. We will notify, or where necessary, consult, with them we plan prior to works starting. This is especially important where a project will include work on a shared or mutual area for which an owner is partly responsible and for which they will be liable for part of the costs.

5.12 Tenant Consultation/Participation & Feedback

We will liaise with the tenants involved regarding the arrangements for carrying out cyclical or planned works.

Whenever possible we will involve the tenants concerned in choices relating to planned works, for example choice of colours or types of kitchen fixtures.

We will give tenants the opportunity to comment on the standard of the repairs carried out to their property by sending them a Reactive Repairs Satisfaction Survey via CX-Feedback each time a repair marked as completed on the Housing Management System (HMS).

We will conduct surveys following completion of planned maintenance and will conduct a general survey of all our tenants on the overall standards of our repairs and maintenance services, normally as part of a wider Tenant Satisfaction Survey undertaken every year.

5.13 Comments & Complaints

Any areas of dissatisfaction or complaints regarding our repairs and maintenance services will be dealt with in accordance with our G12 - Complaints policy and the supporting G12a - Complaint Handling Procedure.

6.0 Training & Monitoring Requirements

6.1 Training

Ark will ensure that members within the Development and Customer Services Directorate will have an awareness of this Policy and receive adequate training to enable them to effectively fulfil their roles and ensure repairs are completed in a timely and cost-effective manner.

6.2 Monitoring

The Housing and Customer Services Manager is responsible for ensuring that this Policy is monitored through key performance indicators related to contractor performance, turnaround time, costs versus budget and customer satisfaction. This will be recorded on a monthly basis and reported to the Head of Housing & Customer Experience on a quarterly basis. The information will be obtained from reports within the HMS.