

## Pentland Housing Group

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# **Pentland Housing Association Ltd**

## **Maintenance Policy**

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# **Pentland Housing Association Ltd**

## **Maintenance Policy**

### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 One of Pentland Housing Association Ltd's key aims is to provide a cost effective, affordable and appropriate maintenance service to our tenants, ensuring full and open consultation with all interested parties on every aspect of our service. This document draws together the main policies contributing to the achievement of this aim, referring to other policies as appropriate.

### **2 General Aims**

- 2.1 To maintain our housing stock to the highest standards possible and to maximise the useful life of our housing stock in regard to quality of components, sustainability and energy efficiency, ensuring that adequate funding is available to achieve this.
- 2.2 To provide a high quality responsive, efficient and cost effective repairs and maintenance service.
- 2.3 To ensure Pentland Housing Association Ltd's Repairs and Maintenance Policy and Procedures comply with all legal requirements.
- 2.4 To maintain clear property records together with a system for recording reported repairs, works instructed, costs, response times and insurance details;
- 2.5 To ensure that tenants are fully informed of both their responsibility and Pentland Housing Association Ltd's responsibility for repairs and maintenance;
- 2.6 To ensure that tenants are fully informed of the procedures for reporting repairs and of the procedures for seeking approval to carry out tenants' alterations/improvements;
- 2.7 To ensure that the Board Members have effective overall control of the repair and maintenance service through the provision of comprehensive information.
- 2.8 To ensure that there are clear procedures for selecting Contractors and for inviting and accepting tenders for repair and maintenance work.
- 2.9 To maintain standard conditions of contract for repair and maintenance contracts.
- 2.10 To agree clear delegation of responsibilities for the authorisation, execution and monitoring of works.

2.11 To determine clear rules for the re-charging of repairs, where appropriate.

- 2.12 To ensure that all works are carried out within an agreed budget which is monitored periodically and to ensure that adequate funding is available to meet current and future maintenance costs.
- 2.13 To ensure that there are procedures established to ensure the smooth flow of information within Pentland Housing Association Ltd and that adequate procedures exist for dealing with emergencies.

### **3 Legal Obligations**

- 3.1 Pentland Housing Association Ltd will meet all its legal requirements and obligations in terms of repairs and maintenance carried out by itself and its agents and will comply in all respects with current legislation relating to housing provision.
- 3.2 The respective liability of landlord and tenant repairs and maintenance will be clearly defined in the Tenancy Agreement and the Tenant's Handbook and website, copies of which will be provided to all tenants. Any disputes regarding the respective liability for repairs and maintenance will be referred initially to the Operations Manager.

### **4 Categories**

- 4.1 **Emergency Repairs** - to be made safe within 8 hours. We will endeavour to complete repairs as soon as possible where practical within the 8 hour timescale eg

- Mains electrical supply failure, (other than a power cut), or dangerous fault.
- Water supply failure (a burst pipe or tank)
- Drain blocked with serious leakage.
- Blocked or totally unusable WC (if only one in the house).
- Total heating system breakdown in winter (aged, disabled, young baby in house-hold or other special needs).
- People at Risk - If an elderly or infirm tenant is at risk or is locked out or in.
- Property left insecure, eg after a break-in.

**(NB** If a tenant cannot reach Pentland Housing Association Ltd's emergency repair service, he/she may call some other tradesman, but must advise Pentland Housing Association Ltd as soon as possible afterwards, otherwise Pentland Housing Association Ltd will not accept responsibility.)

- 4.2 **Urgent Repairs** - to be carried out within 2 working days. These are repairs which need to be dealt with quickly if they are not to become emergencies. Eg

- Missing roof tiles.
- Roof leaks to main buildings.
- Repairs to light and power circuits.
- Repair of leaks on central heating and hot water installations.
- Broken sanitary fittings.
- Overflows and taps.
- Glass replacement.
- Removal of hazards in shared areas.

4.3 **Routine** - to be carried out within 10 working days. These are repairs which are of a non-urgent nature, covering the bulk of normal reactive maintenance. Eg

- Door and window repairs.
- Gutter repairs.
- Roof repairs.
- Plastering repairs.

4.4 **Re-let Repairs** – to be carried out to a void property. These are repairs considered to be essential before any re-let. They are to be completed within 5 working days. Eg

- Gas appliance checks.
- Electrical checks.
- Health & Safety issues
- Uplifting previous tenant's effects.

4.5 **General Repair** – to be carried out within 21 working days. These are repairs that do not immediately effect the tenant's habitation of the property ie fencing, walls or path.

4.6 **Garage Repairs** – these repairs are to be completed within 21 working days.

4.7 There may be circumstances, such as the availability of materials or peak demands, which could prevent these targets being achieved. In such cases the tenant will be given an explanation for the likely delay as soon as possible.

4.8 Where damage has been caused by Pentland Housing Association Ltd to the tenant's decoration the affected area will be re-decorated (see policy no O13 Decoration Allowance Policy).

## 5 Cyclical Maintenance

5.1 This deals with the natural deterioration of building components and involves a regularly repeated cycle of repairs throughout the life of the building. The length of the cycle varies depending upon the nature of the repair.

5.2 Systematic periodic surveys will be carried out to ascertain the condition of

components and will provide information for future maintenance programmes.

5.3 Cyclical work includes the following:

- Servicing of gas appliances owned by Pentland Housing Association Ltd  
This ensures that the Association complies with its legal obligations for gas safety as a landlord, under the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998.  
Pentland Housing Association recognises that as a landlord, it is our legal responsibility to ensure that gas pipe work, appliances, fitting, and flues installed for our residents are safe to use.  
Regular Gas servicing is a key component of Pentland Housing Associations overall asset management ensuring that the useful life of individual heating system components is maximised and hence value for money is optimised
- Estates landscape maintenance
- External paintwork, including pre-paint repairs  
The frequency of repairs will be assessed and the condition of properties monitored to identify whether further cyclical maintenance items should be developed.

5.4 During each void, approximately 10%/year of stock a full periodic electric inspection will be carried out to assess the property and go towards a background of overall stock condition.

5.4 Tenants will be encouraged to contribute in the development of programmes and to provide feedback on the performance of contractors, the materials used and the effectiveness of our policies and procedures. Tenants will be consulted as outlined in our Tenant Participation Strategy.

5.5 When carrying out works Pentland Housing Association Ltd will advise in writing near neighbours of our impending works with the contractors details should they wish to take the opportunity of carrying out works for themselves at their own cost.

5.6 **Inspection** – a detailed external inspection of each property is carried out several months before painterwork is due to take place. This provides the information needed to confirm that painterwork is required, compile the tender documents and specification and organise any work required prior to painting.

5.7 **Contract** – the painterwork contract is subject to competitive tender. Work will be organised to allow painting to take place in the summer months. The Maintenance Officer will regularly inspect work with a final inspection undertaken prior to passing accounts for payment.

5.8 Pentland Housing Association Ltd undertakes external painterwork on a 5 year cycle. Certain schemes will require a shorter cycle if they are in an exposed location or the original painterwork does not last as long as expected.

5.9 Tenants will be given advance notice of cyclical and planned maintenance work. Wherever possible they will be consulted on the works and given a choice eg in the colour of a new kitchen. On completion of works tenants views will be sought via a tenant satisfaction survey. This information will be used to assess the performance of contractors and to bring about service improvements in future.

## **6 Planned Maintenance**

6.1 **Major works** – replacement or renewal of major building components.

6.2 The following will be used to maximise the useful life of the stock and achieve value for money;

- Decisions will be made on updated stock condition surveys and its condition recorded prior to renewal.
-



- Long term savings where possible will be assessed from specifying higher quality materials or improvements to the design of properties.
- Board, staff and tenants will be encouraged to express their views to draw on a wide range of experience and view points.
- **Lifecycles**
  - **Methodology** Pentland Housing Association Ltd has information systems to record all maintenance work carried out and also has a specialist housing module to assist in planning and costing future maintenance work.
  - **Prediction** - Standard replacement components, expected lifespans and costs will be delivered based on standard house types. This information will be revised on a scheme by scheme basis to take account of variations between schemes and information arising from inspections.

### 6.3 Inspection

- In order to have full knowledge of the condition of the housing stock regular maintenance inspections are undertaken. Inspections will involve a full external survey of every property as well as a sample survey of properties internally. The sample will comprise at least 10% of properties in each development and will include one of each house type. The purpose of the inspection will be to assess the performance of components within the house. This information will be used to adjust planned replacement timescales and other defects. It will also be used to check compliance against the SHQS and Energy Efficiency Standard for Scottish Housing with any deficiencies addressed by incorporating work in the future planned maintenance programme. If inspections show a new defect or work needing attention within the next year a larger sample of inspections will be undertaken. Inspections will be formally recorded and information used to revise standard replacement schedules on a scheme by scheme basis.
- Additional inspections may be undertaken for housing management purposes including relet activities. Any maintenance problems highlighted would prompt further inspection and investigation.

6.4 **Prediction** - Standard replacement components, expected lifespans and costs will be delivered based on standard house types. This information will be revised on a scheme by scheme basis to take account of variations between schemes and information arising from inspections.

6.5 **Programme of Work – A** Specialist housing module is used to plot replacements over time to arrive at a works programme for the entire stock for the next 30 years. As above, this is revised annually to take account of information from inspections or unplanned replacements and other problems

that arise.

6.6 **Costings** - An estimated cost is applied to every replacement item including works, VAT, fees and staff time as appropriate. Again this is based on standard costs devised from various sources such as recent tenders, industry advice on costs, consultants advice etc. Replacement standards are in line with specifications in our design guide for new properties, which again vary over time.

#### 6.7 **Tenant Involvement**

- Pentland Housing Association Ltd will endeavour to provide tenants with choices on the colour and style of any replacements where relevant.
- Tenants will be informed at least 2 weeks prior to the start of any contracts.
- Where access is required to tenant's properties Pentland Housing Association Ltd will make appointment times with tenants where necessary.
- The involvement of tenants will be achieved through the following as appropriate:
  - Tenants' groups
  - Public meetings
  - A review of tenant complaints
  - Questionnaires
  - Feedback from completed monitoring forms.

#### 6.8 **Unforeseen Works**

- Pentland Housing Association Ltd insures the structure and fabric of all buildings in its ownership. It is the responsibility of the tenant to purchase further insurance for their property's contents.
- Where a defect or emergency has caused damage to Pentland Housing Association Ltd's buildings, we will seek to recover our costs through making an insurance claim wherever appropriate.
- Should major unforeseen work arise the problem will be fully investigated, agreed, possibly involving professional consultants, and a full recommendation will be submitted to the Board prior to work being undertaken, to comply with standing orders delegated authorities.
- There are occasions where major maintenance work, which has not been foreseen, is required. Most work falling into this category such as fire, flood, storm damage and subsidence will be covered by building insurance. However, other items may arise unexpectedly, such as a discovery that some component used in buildings is dangerous and requires replacement. This has happened in the past with materials such as asbestos.



- Pentland Housing Association Ltd has no specific contingency fund to pay for unforeseen work that may arise. In some cases the work will be subject to an insurance claim. Where Pentland Housing Association Ltd must meet the cost itself will be paid for either from the current repairs and maintenance budget or, if a capital item, from the major repairs fund. Budget adjustments would require to be made accordingly in line with financial regulations.

## **7 Funding**

7.1 Pentland Housing Association Ltd has provision for funding the maintenance items as follows:

7.2 **Day to Day Repairs** - Pentland Housing Association Ltd's annual budget and quarterly management accounts contain provision for day to day repairs under "Reactive Maintenance Costs". Spend against budget is reported to the Board quarterly with the budget broken down into the following headings: Reactive repairs, Reactive recharges/re-let repairs, Reactive repairs aids and adapts, Reactive repairs replacement and contingency fund.

### **7.3 Rechargeable Repairs**

- Pentland Housing Association Ltd provides a comprehensive repairs service with only very few items being considered to the responsibility of the tenant. This reflects the statutory obligations that Pentland Housing Association Ltd has under the Housing (Scotland) Act, 2001.
- A clear division of responsibility has been agreed by the Board and is incorporated into the Tenants Handbook.
- The exception to this comprehensive service is where a repair becomes necessary as a result of the wilful, negligent or accidental actions of the tenant's household rather than through fair wear and tear. Under the terms of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement, Pentland Housing Association Ltd will not be responsible for repairing damage caused by the Police or other agency lawfully forcing entry to a property.
- Under such circumstances, the tenant will be advised of the estimated cost of replacement/repair and be required to lodge this sum with Pentland Housing Association Ltd prior to work proceeding. A final account will then be processed when the work is complete.
- In an emergency situation and at the discretion of the officer on call, the above procedure can be dispensed with but vigorous efforts will be made to recover costs after the event.

#### 7.4 Defects

- The contractor meets the cost of rectifying defects during the defect liability period. Pentland Housing Association Ltd retains a percentage of the contract sum as specified in the building contract that is only released when Pentland Housing Association Ltd is satisfied that all defects have been attended to.
- In design & build contracts and shared ownership developments Pentland Housing Association Ltd obtains Building Life Plans cover. The cost of this is contained in total scheme costs and is an approved cost in terms of capital funding from Scottish Government. This provides 12 year cover for structural and component defects. If such a problem arises that cannot be resolved with the contractor/consultants a claim will be submitted to Building Life Plans.
- Partnership contracts may have different arrangements over retention monies and Building Life Plans cover but the contractor will remain responsible for carrying out defect work.

7.5 **Cyclical Works** - Each year a sum of money is taken from rental income into a cyclical maintenance reserve. This reserve is then used to fund the cyclical contracts. These sums are subject to regular review.

7.6 **Planned Maintenance** - The planned maintenance programme is costed, translated into a net present value and a calculation is made of the amount of money required to be set aside from rental income each year to cover planned expenditure. It is in the nature of these funds that little requires to be spent when the houses are new with extensive contracts starting when the property is 15 years old.

#### 7.7 Authority and Control

- Pentland Housing Association Ltd's Board of Directors approves the overall budget for repairs, maintenance and improvements as part of the annual budget setting process.
- The repairs and maintenance service is funded from the following sources:
  - The reactive repairs budget, which is financed from our annual rental income;
  - Our reserves, which are the accumulation of sums set aside from rental income in previous years to fund the annual programmes of cyclical painting, planned maintenance and property improvements, plus any unexpected major repairs;
  - Contributions from the income we receive from sharing and private owners for communal repairs, for which Pentland Housing Association Ltd has some responsibility: ie where it owns some of the communal areas;

- Payments received from our insurers as a result of claims we have submitted on insurable items which have been damaged.

- Each budget has separate sub-divisions where appropriate, in order to allow Pentland Housing Association Ltd to closely monitor and control expenditure in its repairs and maintenance budget.

## **8 Procurement**

- 8.1 Pentland Housing Association Ltd will ensure that the procurement of all services required to fulfil this repairs and maintenance policy is consistent with its Procurement Policy and list of approved consultants and contractors. These are separate policies that are subject to separate review.

## **9 Monitoring**

- 9.1 Financial expenditure will be monitored by the Board of Directors on a quarterly basis against the annual maintenance budget.
- 9.2 A property based data system will be maintained providing a repairs history for each dwelling. This will be backed up by up-dated stock condition data.
- 9.3 Performance against target response times will be monitored on a monthly basis and reported on a quarterly basis with additional comment of corrective actions.
- 9.4 When works order information is sent out to tenants, returned satisfaction slips will be used as data for quarterly reports and as a quality control mechanism.
- 9.5 The Board Members shall receive the following reports:

- Repairs and Maintenance Budget (Annually)
- Budget -v- Actual (Management Accounts) (Quarterly)
- Review of Select List of Contractors (Annually)
- Review of response time for repairs and maintenance (Quarterly)
- Performance measured against response times (Quarterly)
- Compensation Claims and payments made (Annually)
- Tenants alterations/improvements (Annually)
- Rechargeable Repairs (Annually)
- Review of Select List of Consultants (As required)

## **10 Approved Contractor/Consultant List**

- 10.1 Pentland Housing Association Ltd will maintain a list of Approved Contractors/Consultants for repairs and maintenance work. This list of Approved Contractors/Consultants will be subject to annual review. Additions to, or removal from, the list will be entirely at the discretion of the Board of Directors. All contractors are expected to adhere to Pentland Housing



Association Ltd's Code of Conduct for Contractors.

- 10.2 Contractors will be instructed to carry out repairs based on their trade, location and availability. Wherever possible, locally based contractors will be used, especially for day to day repairs, subject always to performance and value for money.
- 10.3 **Performance Management** - In order to monitor its repairs and maintenance service, and to ensure that repairs are carried out within the timescale and to the high quality expected by Pentland Housing Association Ltd, the following measures are in place:
- 10.4 **Estimated Job Cost** – When ordering a repair, the Maintenance Officer will estimate the cost of the repair job. This is clearly marked on the written order request sent to the contractor. If, after visiting the property the contractor estimates that the repair will exceed this estimated limit, he/she must contact Pentland Housing Association Ltd to explain the circumstances and the repair authorised before proceeding with the work. If this approval is not sought, Pentland Housing Association Ltd reserves the right to refuse payment above the estimated limit.
- 10.5 **10.5Pre-inspection** – These will be carried out by the Maintenance Officer where the tenant is unable to fully explain the problem, where the level of repairs reported by a tenant creates concern, where a similar repair has recently been carried out, where Pentland Housing Association Ltd knows or reasonably suspects that the tenant caused the damage, or where it could lead to an insurance claim by Pentland Housing Association Ltd.
- 10.6 **For day to day** repairs, Pentland Housing Association Ltd will aim to inspect a representative example of repairs prior to issuing an instruction to a contractor. Examples of repairs to be inspected are:
- Those costing over £1000
  - Those where the tenant has given insufficient information to enable the contractor to be instructed
  - Those where there is dampness or condensation reported
  - Those required in relet properties
  - Those covered by the Right to Repair where inspection is considered necessary.
- 10.7 **Post-inspection**
- The Maintenance Officer will inspect at least 10% of repairs after completion. This sample will be selected at random across the entire spectrum of trades and areas. Completed repairs where a tenant has expressed dissatisfaction will also be inspected, as will all repairs costing in excess of £1000.
  - Post-inspection will be carried out to ensure that the defect was repaired in accordance with Pentland Housing Association Ltd's instructions, that the value of the work claimed is accurate, that the work was completed to Pentland Housing Association Ltd's standard, and that the tenant is satisfied with the repair and the contractor's conduct.

- 10.8 **Follow-up Phone Calls** – Where Pentland Housing Association Ltd has not received confirmation of the completion of a repair, the Technical Administrator will contact the contractor and/or tenant to confirm that it has been completed within 5 working days of the date it was due to be completed.
- 10.9 **Satisfaction slip** – The computer system automatically generates a repairs order copy that is sent to the tenant. This copy details the repair that has been ordered, the timescale for completion, and the contractor instructed to carry out the work. Tenants are encouraged to return the slip to Pentland Housing Association Ltd, stating whether the repair was completed satisfactorily and on time. Additional contact methods such as email/texting are available to enable more options of recording satisfaction levels.

## 11 Adaptations

- 11.1 Pentland Housing Association Ltd will comply with the Adaptations Policy.

## 12 Reporting Repairs

- 12.1 Tenants are required under the terms of their tenancy agreements to immediately report damage, faults, or disrepair to Pentland Housing Association Ltd. Where a tenant has deliberately or negligently failed to report a repair, resulting in further damage and/or cost to Pentland Housing Association Ltd, Pentland Housing Association Ltd will recharge that tenant for the cost.
- 12.2 Tenants may report repairs by telephone or in person at Pentland Housing Association Ltd's office during office hours, or by letter or email either direct or via the website. Requests for repairs will be directed to trained staff who have resources to instruct contractors to carry out the work or arrange an inspection prior to instructing work. Staff will request the tenant to describe the defect in the property, to accurately describe the repair wherever possible.
- 12.3 Tenants are advised in detail of how to report a repair by their Housing Officer when they are signed up to the tenancy. The repairs reporting procedure is also detailed in the Tenant's Handbook.
- 12.4 If a tenant reports a repair to a Housing Officer who is visiting them, the Housing Officer will immediately contact the Maintenance department in order to report the repair.
- 12.4 All reported repairs are categorised and logged onto Pentland Housing Association Ltd's computer software system by a member of the Maintenance department.
- 12.5 An emergency repairs service is provided to deal with emergencies that arise outwith office hours.

- 12.6 If the job is of a minor nature an instruction will be passed to the contractor for action. If it is of a more extensive nature or if there are doubts about the work that is required, a member of our staff will arrange to visit the property to carry out an inspection.
- 12.7 Tenants will be informed in writing of the action to be taken by Pentland Housing Association Ltd. This will include confirmation of the work instructed, the priority attached to the work, target timescales for its completion, and details of any appointment arrangements made with the tenant. Pentland Housing Association Ltd in arranging for these repairs will also meet the specific requirements of the Right to Repair scheme introduced through the Housing (Scotland) Act, 2001. A stamped addressed envelope and questionnaire to report on satisfaction following completion of the repair, will also be included with the written confirmation issued to the tenants.
- 12.8 Repairs procedures will be well publicised using Pentland Housing Association Ltd's regular newsletters, tenants handbook and letters to tenants on repairs affecting them. Procedures will be available in other languages or in other formats where appropriate.
- 12.9 Appointments will be offered for undertaking all non-emergency repair work in occupied homes, where the work requires internal access. The appointments will be made in accordance with the repairs category and required response times and after agreement with the contractor on notice required and their operational arrangements. Work will require to be undertaken within agreed half-day time bands. The purpose of the repairs by appointment system is to reduce the uncertainty for tenants about the date when the contractor will require access to their house to undertake repairs.

### **13 Access**

- 13.1 Where a contractor calls to carry out a repair and cannot gain access they will leave a postcard giving contact details asking the tenant to get in touch to arrange access. If access is unavailable on the second attempt the contractor will advise Pentland Housing Association Ltd who will cancel the order and advise the tenant that if they still wish the repair to be carried out they will need to contact Pentland Housing Association Ltd again.
- 13.2 Tenants are required under the terms of their tenancy agreement to allow Pentland Housing Association Ltd access into their home to inspect, carry out repairs, or do other works that are necessary to their property or adjoining properties. Where it is deemed necessary in the case of an emergency, Pentland Housing Association Ltd retain the right to force entry.

### **14 Right to Repair**

- 14.1 Pentland Housing Association Ltd will comply with the Right to Repair scheme as laid out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. (Policy O17 Right to Repair)

Policy).

## **15 Compensation for Improvements**

- 15.1 Pentland Housing Association Ltd will comply with the Right to Compensation for Improvements scheme as laid out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. (Policy O12 Compensation for Improvements Policy).

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