

**RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY**

Job Title	Head of Property Services
Ratified by forum & date	Customer Committee 21 October 2020
	Operations Committee 4 November 2020
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Review date	November 2023

## **1. Policy Statement**

- 1.1 The Cambridge Housing Society Limited (CHS) recognises the importance of providing a good quality responsive repairs service. This Policy sets out how CHS will provide repairs and maintenance services to its customers' homes and communal areas. CHS is committed to providing an effective service to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction and maintain the value of its housing stock.
- 1.2 The Responsive Repairs Policy will ensure that:
- ✓ CHS meets its relevant statutory and landlord compliance obligations;
  - ✓ Service delivery meets the standards reasonably expected of us by our customers;
  - ✓ feedback from customers is used to review the ways this service is delivered and make the necessary improvements;
  - ✓ our customers' homes are and continue to be fit for purpose;
  - ✓ the service is cost effective, provides Value For Money and is procured in line with our Financial Regulations;
  - ✓ the delivery of responsive repairs is in line with CHS' agreed Asset Management Strategy.
- 1.3 This Policy is supported by:
- ✓ CHS' agreed Service Standards which details the different ways customers can report repairs;
  - ✓ CHS' Tenants Handbook which details how repairs will be prioritised and the repairing obligations of CHS and its customers
  - ✓ CHS' agreed Contractor's Code of Conduct which details CHS' and our customers' expectations of our contractors when delivering repairs

## **2. Regulatory Code and Legal Framework**

- CHS carries out repairs in line with its legal and statutory obligations, to safeguard the health, safety and security of customers, other occupants or visitors and to safeguard the building and environment. These obligations include:
  - ✓ The Home Standard of the Regulatory framework for social housing in England (from April 2012) which requires Registered Providers:
    - 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.
    - to ensure that customers' homes meets the Decent Homes standard. For properties where the standards of design and quality, that applied when the home was built, are higher than those of the Decent Homes Standard Registered Providers should continue to meet these standards.
  - ✓ CHS' responsibility under section 11 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 for maintaining the structure and exterior of our properties (including

drains, gutters and external pipes) and installations in the property for the supply of water, gas and electricity; and for sanitation (including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences).

- ✓ CHS is required to consult with leaseholders (including shared owners) prior to entering into Qualifying Long Term Agreements and prior to undertaking Qualifying works, in accordance with Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 as amended by the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002.
- ✓ CHS is required to maintain its homes in line with the Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2019.

### **3. Reporting Repairs**

3.1 Repairs can be reported in a variety of ways:

- ✓ Using CHS main switchboard number 0300 111 3555. A small number of options will be offered to direct the customer to the most suitable contractor for the repair being reported;
- ✓ On line via the customer portal – myCHS;
- ✓ Via e-mail to [repairsline@chsgroup.org.uk](mailto:repairsline@chsgroup.org.uk);
- ✓ In writing to the main head office;
- ✓ In person at the main head office;
- ✓ Via face to face contact with CHS staff;
- ✓ Via LiveChat.

3.2 Emergency repairs can be reported via the main switchboard number 24 hours a day seven days a week. Non-emergency repairs will be dealt with during office hours – Monday to Friday 9.00am to 5.00 pm.

### **4. Repair Responsibilities**

- 4.1 CHS is responsible for repairing and maintaining buildings and any fixtures and fittings originally provided, as per individual tenancy agreements and lease agreements. Details of the repairing responsibilities are detailed in section 4 of the Tenants Handbook – this can be found on CHS' website - [www.chsgroup.org.uk/chs-tenancy-handbook/](http://www.chsgroup.org.uk/chs-tenancy-handbook/).
- 4.2 Responsibilities may be varied at the discretion of CHS to take into account the care and support needs of the customer or the nature of the tenancy or lease.
- 4.3 CHS will provide customers with details of repair responsibilities at tenancy sign up, in customer literature, the CHS website and in response to enquiries.

- 4.4 Where repairs are required as a result of damage caused by the customer or due to lack of due care and attention, consideration will be given to recovery of these costs in accordance with CHS' Recharge Policy. This applies to both current and outgoing customers.
- 4.5 Where CHS has given written permission for a customer to alter the property, the responsibility for repairing this alteration will be with the customer. If this item is gifted to an incoming customer at change of tenancy, the repairing obligation will pass to the new customer.

More details can be found in the Tenants' Alterations Policy and in section 6 of the Tenants Handbook – this can be found on CHS' website – [www.chsgroup.org.uk/chs-tenancy-handbook/](http://www.chsgroup.org.uk/chs-tenancy-handbook/).

## **5. Repair Priorities**

- 5.1 CHS prioritises responsive repairs within the following categories:
- ✓ Emergency repair – within 24 hours (depending on the nature of the emergency). Any repair that is required in order to sustain the immediate health, safety or security of the customer at risk, or that could adversely affect the structure of the building.
  - ✓ Non-emergency repair - as agreed with the customer, subject to a mutually convenient appointment (see section 6) - any responsive repair that is not an emergency.
- 5.2 CHS may use its discretion to prioritise a non-emergency repair to a higher priority where there is a potential risk to the health and safety of the customer due to their vulnerability.

## **6. Appointments**

- 6.1 The process of arranging appointments, scheduling works and completing the repair will be managed by CHS' contractor. Any requests for updates or changes to the agreed repair should be directed in the first instance to the relevant contractor for resolution.
- 6.2 The process of managing completion of repairs will be agreed with the contractors, and will be based on improvements identified by customers. These improvements include reminder messages for agreed appointments, real time updates where operatives are running late or unable to attend, arranging follow up appointments whilst at the property, leaving no access cards and leaving the property safe and secure.

## **7. Customer Feedback**

- 7.1 CHS welcomes feedback from customers on the overall delivery of each repair. For most repairs, an automated message will be sent to customers' phone within 24 hours of a repair being completed, requesting feedback. Other forms of collecting customer feedback may be used where the automated messaging is not appropriate.

- 7.2 All recorded dissatisfied responses will be followed up by CHS to understand the reasons for dissatisfaction.
- 7.3 The results of the feedback will be used to measure the overall levels of satisfaction with the Repairs and Maintenance service, and be used to identify areas for improvement.
- 7.4 Complaints about the delivery of the responsive repair service should initially be directed to the relevant contractor for resolution. If a customer is not satisfied with the resolution, the complaint should be referred to CHS in line with CHS' Complaints Policy.

## **8. Ensuring Quality and Value for Money**

- 8.1 In addition to customer feedback, CHS will carry out random post-inspections of completed responsive repairs in line with current Financial Regulations. The results of these post-inspections will be reported to the relevant contractor at regular contract meetings.
- 8.2 Any work that does not meet the required standard or has not resolved the initial problem will be classed as a recall, for which there will be no additional charge. This will apply for three months following the completion of the initial repair.
- 8.3 In order to properly diagnose a repair and to agree the required works, CHS may need to pre-inspect. CHS aims to carry out these pre-inspections within two days of the initial report.
- 8.4 CHS will procure its repairs and maintenance contracts in line with existing procurement regulations and its own procurement strategy. The aim of the procurement will be to enter into contracts that provide the best value for money taking into account the quality of the overall service.