

TOWER HAMLETS COMMUNITY HOUSING

Repairs - Policy

1. Statement of Intent

- 1.1 This policy enables Tower Hamlets Community Housing (THCH) to deliver a repairs service which is cost effective, and which maintains and improves the condition of our stock.
- 1.2 THCH will aim to provide a fast and efficient responsive repair service including a 24 hour service to cover any emergency housing repair which may occur. This complies with our statutory obligations and as set out in resident's lease and tenancy agreements.
- 1.3 THCH seeks to offer its residents a high quality, customer orientated service and will ensure that homes are warm and comfortable and in good and safe repair.
- 1.4 This policy defines which repairs THCH will be responsible for and those which residents are responsible for, (as per the guidelines below), and will ensure this information is available to all residents.
- 1.5 This policy sets the priorities and the timescales to respond to, and complete repairs, (as per the guidelines below), and will ensure residents are aware of these priority timescales.

2. General Guidance

- 2.1 THCH will ensure that all residents know what to expect from the service from the time they first report a repair through to its completion and any follow-up inspections and surveys.
- 2.2 We will set standards of customer care that residents should expect from contractors employed by THCH.
- 2.3 THCH will ensure up to date and comprehensive records are kept on each dwelling and its attributes, and that all repair jobs will be processed and fully logged to ensure repair requests are correctly raised and progressed promptly.
- 2.4 THCH will operate an appointments system for the carrying out of repair work, and will arrange access for repairs at times which are convenient for residents.
- 2.5 Local Housing Officers will allocate resources to each repair and use Handypersons in the first instance for all non-specialist repairs, and

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- contractors where specialist skills are required. If the Handyman is unable to perform the repair, an inspector will be sent to conduct a pre-inspection and a specialist contractor may be required subsequently.
- 2.6 THCH will ensure that repair requests are pre-inspected as per the priority timescales defined in the guidelines below. The percentage of pre-inspections conducted will be determined by Performance Review Panel.
 - 2.7 THCH will aim to adhere to the priority timescales for the completion of repair work (as per the guidelines below), and will analyse and report to Committee actual response times against these timescales.
 - 2.8 To minimise void periods, THCH will inspect and carry out repairs to vacant properties promptly and effectively, as per the timescales defined in the guidelines below.
 - 2.9 THCH will ensure that reports from tenants about repairs to gas appliances are dealt with promptly.
 - 2.10 THCH's Housing staff will conduct post-inspections on completed repairs, as per the minimum post-inspection levels operating at the time, to ensure repairs have been completed correctly and to an acceptable standard. Analysis of post-inspection repairs will be carried out and reported on, on a regular basis.
 - 2.11 THCH will ensure that they obtain value for money from contractors and that total expenditure on repairs falls within budgets set.
 - 2.12 THCH will ensure that both THCH's own staff and its contractors deliver high standards of customer care. This will be achieved through monitoring, assessing and reporting on the speed, efficiency and effectiveness of completing repairs, (e.g. against the target timescales for responding to and completing repairs as defined in the guidelines below).
 - 2.13 THCH will ensure that all contractors undertaking housing repairs abide by a code of conduct designed to ensure high standards of customer care.
 - 2.14 THCH will monitor, analyse and report on resident satisfaction with the repairs service, and ensure that any complaints about the service are investigated promptly, and follow the stages of the THCH complaints procedure. THCH will ensure customers are correctly compensated for missed appointments.
 - 2.15 THCH will publicise its policy on residents' improvements, adaptations, the "Right to Repair" and compensation.

- 2.16 THCH will ensure that 'Right to Repair' requests are dealt with correctly, so small emergency or urgent repairs are done quickly and compensation is paid if THCH fail to meet this obligation.
- 2.17 THCH will inform residents in advance of major planned improvements to their homes (e.g. new kitchen, new windows). Requests for repairs which are part of an upcoming planned & cyclical maintenance programme will be postponed if they are not classed as an emergency or urgent repair.
- 2.18 THCH will provide clear information to residents on contact details to report repairs, as per the details defined in the guidelines below.
- 2.19 THCH is committed to involving residents in the management of their homes and will adopt a flexible approach to enable residents to participate as fully as possible in the development of policy. Resident groups will be encouraged to take part in monitoring and reviewing the operation of this policy and to contribute to reassessment of targets arising from it.
- 2.20 THCH will recover costs from residents who abuse the service (e.g. by calling out emergency contractors unnecessarily) or who wilfully damage their homes.
- 2.21 THCH will not discriminate in the operation of any of its housing management policies on the basis of age, gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, marital status, family circumstances, political or sexual orientation, medical condition or disability. The operation of this policy is not expected to give rise to any outcomes which could be discriminatory.
- 2.22 Although this policy refers to residents as a generic term THCH's repairs service is based upon contractual obligations set out in tenancy and lease agreements.
- 2.23 THCH will offer internal repairs to leaseholders on request, carried out to the same standards and timescales as for tenants. The cost for the work plus administrative oncosts will be recharged to the leaseholder.
- 2.24 This policy will be reviewed annually.

3. Detailed Guidance

THCH'S REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1 THCH is responsible for maintaining their property. This includes looking after:

3.1.1 Repair of Structure and Exterior - To keep the structure and exterior of the premises in good repair including:

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- 3.1.1.1 the roof
- 3.1.1.2 drains, gutters and external pipes
- 3.1.1.3 outside walls, outside doors, window cills, window catches, sash cords (glass) and window frames, including any necessary external painting or decoration
- 3.1.1.4 internal walls, skirting boards, door jambs, thresholds, floors and ceilings (but not painting and decoration)
- 3.1.1.5 major internal plasterwork
- 3.1.1.6 chimneys and chimney stacks and flues (including sweeping)
- 3.1.1.7 boundary walls, fences, pathways, steps and ramps
- 3.1.1.8 garages and outbuildings (where provided by THCH)
- 3.1.1.9 stairlifts (where provided by THCH)

3.1.2 Repair of Installations - To keep in good repair and proper working order any installations provided or adapted by THCH for space heating, water heating and sanitation and for the supply of water, gas and electricity, including:

- 3.1.2.1 water pipes and tanks, gas pipes and electrical wiring
- 3.1.2.2 electrical sockets and light fittings (but not plugs or non -THCH appliances)
- 3.1.2.3 basins, sinks, baths, toilets, flushing systems and waste pipes,
- 3.1.2.4 water heaters, boilers, fireplaces, fitted fires and radiators
- 3.1.2.5 smoke alarms

3.1.3 Repair of Common Parts - To take reasonable care to keep the following in reasonable repair and fit for use by residents and visitors to the premises:

- 3.1.3.1 common entrances, halls and passageways
- 3.1.3.2 stairways and lifts
- 3.1.3.3 rubbish chutes and chambers
- 3.1.3.4 lighting
- 3.1.3.5 boundary fences, railings and walls
- 3.1.3.6 estate roads and paths
- 3.1.3.7 communal satellite transmission receiving equipment
- 3.1.3.8 security equipment
- 3.1.3.9 any other common parts

3.1.4. Decoration of Exterior and Common Parts - to keep the exterior of the premises and any common parts in a reasonable state of decoration, and to decorate these areas on a regular programme.

3.1.5 THCH will also provide the following repairs to

- 3.1.5.1 **Squatted or illegally occupied property:** Structural or health & safety only.
- 3.1.5.2 **Property sold under 'Right to Buy':** Statutory repairs
- 3.1.5.3 **Leaseholder property:** Communal repairs only

4. **RESIDENT'S REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES**

4.1 The tenant is responsible for minor repairs. This includes:

4.1.1. Internal Decoration and other matters - To keep the interior of the premises in good and tenable repair and in clean and good decorative condition, and to decorate all internal parts of the premises as frequently as is necessary to keep them in reasonable decorative order.

4.1.2 Minor Repairs - To carry out minor repairs such as the following:

- 4.1.2.1 repairs to internal doors and ironmongery including, altering doors for carpets
- 4.1.2.2 appliances, fixtures, fittings, extensions and additions -where installed by the tenant with or without permission unless formally adopted by THCH.
- 4.1.2.3 lost or damaged keys
- 4.1.2.4 small plaster cracks
- 4.1.2.5 TV aerials or satellite dishes (unless communal) and any damage to property or neighbouring property caused by their installation
- 4.1.2.6 clothes posts and lines (unless communal)

5. **REPAIR PRIORITIES**

5.1 Repairs that are the responsibility of THCH will be categorised as "emergency", "urgent", "priority" or "normal".

5.1.1 THCH's **Emergency** repair responsibilities are:

- 5.1.1.1 Securing premises following break-ins, vandalism, racial attacks or domestic violence
- 5.1.1.2 Blocked drains or soil pipes
- 5.1.1.3 Total loss of water
- 5.1.1.4 Total loss of space or water heating
- 5.1.1.5 Partial loss of space or water heating (1st November- 30th April)
- 5.1.1.6 Toilet not flushing where there is no other working toilet in the property
- 5.1.1.7 Total loss of electric power
- 5.1.1.8 Storm, accident or flood damage to the structure

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- 5.1.1.9 Lift not working
- 5.1.1.10 Total failure of communal stair case lighting
- 5.1.1.11 Removal of obscene and racist graffiti in resident or communal areas.
- 5.1.1.12 Water tap which cannot be turned off
- 5.1.1.13 Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting.
- 5.1.1.14 Glazing repair where there is possible security or injury risk.
- 5.1.1.15 Roof repair where electrical installation is likely to be affected.
- 5.1.1.16 Failure of a secure door entry system.

5.1.2 THCH's **Urgent** repair responsibilities are:

- 5.1.2.1 Partial loss of electrical power
- 5.1.2.2 Partial loss of water supply
- 5.1.2.3 Partial loss of space or water heating (1st May - 31st October)
- 5.1.2.4 Blocked sink, bath or wash hand basin
- 5.1.2.5 Toilet not flushing where there is another working toilet
- 5.1.2.6 Communal TV aerials
- 5.1.2.7 Water tap which cannot be turned on
- 5.1.2.8 Loose or detached banister or hand-rail
- 5.1.2.9 Rotten timber flooring or stair tread
- 5.1.2.10 Partial failure of communal staircase lighting

5.1.3 THCH's **Priority** repair responsibilities are:

- 5.1.3.1 Minor leaks to internal water services
- 5.1.3.2 Defective individual power points
- 5.1.3.3 Roof leaks
- 5.1.3.4 Broken extractor fan in kitchen or bathroom
- 5.1.3.5 Individual door entry phones not working

5.1.4 THCH's **Normal** repair responsibilities are:

- 5.1.4.1 Repairs to blocked and leaking gutters and rainwater pipes
- 5.1.4.2 Minor repairs to external doors, windows and roofs
- 5.1.4.3 Repairs to external rendering, pointing and air vents etc.
- 5.1.4.4 Renewal or replacement of storage tank
- 5.1.4.5 Repairs to defective central heating appliances not covered by other priorities
- 5.1.4.6 Re-glazing of external doors and windows
- 5.1.4.7 Repairs to Garages, store sheds, locking posts, fences, wooden floors, steps and staircases
- 5.1.4.8 Non-contractual repairs as set out in para 11.

6. **TIMESCALES FOR CARRYING OUT REPAIRS**

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6.1 The standard timescales for attending to these repairs are:

6.1.1 **Emergency:** Respond within 1 hour (2 hours for contractor response) and complete work within 24 hours.

6.1.2 **Urgent:** Respond within 2 working days and complete work within 3 working days.

6.1.3 **Priority:** Respond within 5 working days and complete work within 7 working days.

6.1.4 **Normal:** Respond within 10 working days and complete work within 20 working days.

7. **TIMESCALES FOR CARRYING OUT PRE-INSPECTION OF REPAIRS**

7.1 The standard timescales for attending to pre-inspection of these repairs are:

7.1.1 **Emergency:** on the same day

7.1.2 **Urgent:** by the next working day

7.1.3 **Priority:** within 3 working days

7.1.4 **Normal:** within 5 working days

7.1.5 **Void Properties:** within 1 working day from receipt of the keys

8. **MINIMUM POST-INSPECTION LEVELS**

8.1 The overall minimum post-inspection levels required are:

8.1.1 2% of jobs under £100

8.1.2 5% of jobs between £101 - £250

8.1.3 10% of jobs between £251 - £500

8.1.4 15% of jobs between £501 - £1000

8.1.5 100% of jobs £1000 and over

8.1.6 100% of tenant complaints

8.1.7 100% of void repairs

9. **REPORTING REPAIRS**

9.1 All repairs should be reported in working hours to the Local Housing Office and outside hours, at weekends and bank holidays to the Emergency Call Out number.

10. **RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS**

- 10.1 THCH will offer a service to carry out repairs on request from tenants and leaseholders which are outside the scope of this policy and charge for the cost of this work. Where a resident has service charge or rent arrears or owes THCH any other debt then THCH may require payment for the work in advance.

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