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Responsive Repairs & Cyclical Maintenance Policy

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1. INTRODUCTION

As a social landlord, Nehemiah United Churches Housing Association hereinafter referred to as Nehemiah Housing (NH) recognises meeting residents' expectations of a high standard of service delivery is essential. NH acknowledges that the provision of a value for money repairs service that is both responsive and of the highest technical competence is one of its core priorities. NH has prepared this policy after consultation with recognised resident groups.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the corresponding NH Repairs and Maintenance procedures and other policies referred to within this document.

1.1 Definitions

For the purpose of this policy, the following definitions apply:

Repair - The process of rectifying a component or installation in a Nehemiah Housing owned and/or managed property for which it is responsible, when it is faulty or in a state of disrepair.

Maintenance - The upkeep of components or installations in a NH owned and/or managed property for which it is responsible.

Resident - A tenant of a Nehemiah Housing.

RESPONSIVE DAY TO DAY REPAIRS

For responsive repairs, our aim is to arrange an appointment during first contact with the resident and complete the repair in one visit. During normal working hours (8:00am to 5:00pm) NH operate a Customer Contact Centre, through which all repair requests must be made. We will aim to ensure that all urgent and routine repairs (with the exception of specialist work requiring contact with a third party) will be made by appointment with the resident. Residents may report repairs by any of the following means:

By telephone on **0800 849 1400** or mobile 0303030 1000
via the NH website www.nehemiah.co.uk
Out of Hours Emergency Repairs

Provisions for emergency repairs outside of normal working hours can be accessed by the standard responsive repairs telephone number. Calls will be redirected automatically through to call centre out of hour's service at 5:00pm. Only those repairs categorised as emergencies are dealt with out of office hours. If the reported repair is deemed not to be an emergency, then the resident will be asked to call back during working hours to make an appointment.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Aims

- To effectively manage the repairs and maintenance obligations of NH, for its residents
- To comply with all relevant government legislative requirements
- To ensure that all residents always live in a safe and habitable environment.

Objectives

- To run an effective and reliable responsive repairs service
- To continuously improve performance
- To give the highest levels of residents' satisfaction
- To provide a service that gives value for money.
- To engage openly and responsively with residents about repairs to their home
- To provide technical expertise via NH staff and contractors
- To maintain up to date information about NH residents, homes and the housing sector

3. POLICY STATEMENT

NH is committed to providing a high-quality service and all staff and suppliers are trained to work towards this aim. This policy recognises that a successful Repairs and Maintenance service considers its customers, its resources, its statutory obligations, and external affecting factors. As a landlord, NH have a responsibility to protect the value of its housing stock and to ensure that the service standards and obligations made to its customers in respect of their homes are honoured. NH expects to work together with customers to ensure the high quality of its homes, through the meeting of mutual responsibilities.

4. LEGISLATION AND REGULATION

- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- Housing & Planning Act 2016
- The Construction (Design and Management) **Regulations 2015 (CDM 2015)**
- Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Commonhold & Leasehold Reform Act 2002
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Building Regulations Act 2016
- Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Sections 2, 3 and 4
- Housing Health and Safety Rating System 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- HCA – The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England from April 2012
2006 Decent Homes Standard.
- Electrical at Work Regulations 1989 (EWR)

5. STANDARDS

5.1 Service Standards

- Provide a 24hr, 7 day a week service to report emergency / routine repairs.
- To attend and complete repairs works to published timescales.
- Offer a choice of appointment times.
- Carry out a gas safety check where required each year.
- Aim to inspect at least 10% of all repairs and any repair subject to a complaint aim to inspect 10% of communal repairs.

6. COMPLAINTS

The Association will deal with any formal complaint received by tenants relating to the Repairs Service in accordance with the Association's Customer Feedback Procedure.

7. HEATING AND HOT WATER: PROVISION & SERVICING

NH will ensure necessary arrangements are in place to provide:

- A reactive repairs service which includes a 24-hour emergency response for some repairs in line with our Repairs and Maintenance responsibilities
- The annual gas safety inspection programme for individual, communal and commercial gas boilers and appliances for which it is responsible
- NH is committed to meeting its legislative requirements ensuring all of its homes with a gas supply have a valid Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR). NH will service all gas appliances and boilers for all of its homes within 12 months of the previous service date. NH will seek to ensure that annual safety checks and servicing is undertaken in domestic and commercial properties in accordance with their tenancy agreement and prior to a new tenancy. Failure to allow access for servicing will result in NH following formal procedures to gain access. This may involve seeking legal assistance, applying for an injunction and in some cases an eviction whereby residents may lose their home.

NH is dedicated to the provision of a high-quality gas servicing and repairs service that:

- Preserves the safety of its residents.
- Properly discharges its legal and regulatory obligations.
- Achieves the service standards outlined to its residents protects the value of its housing stock.
- Considers energy efficiency when carrying out necessary replacements.

7.1 Failing Safety Checks

NH will upgrade boilers and remove any gas fires that fail their annual inspection. Any faulty gas appliance owned by the resident that is discovered to be connected to the system will have a 'defective appliance' label attached and will be disconnected. It is the resident's responsibility to maintain or remove their own defective appliances once advised.

7.2 Communal Systems

Where NH has the responsibility of the maintenance or servicing of a communal system, it will always make sure it does so in line with published repairs and maintenance service standards.

8. CYCLICAL MAINTENANCE

Certain types of work require attention on a cyclical basis such as gas heating servicing, electrical heating servicing, grass cutting, grounds maintenance, passenger lift servicing, fire alarm and fire prevention equipment maintenance, water hygiene maintenance, communal area decoration and external painting. The Association will formulate suitable contracts to ensure that this type of work is programmed and carried out on a regular basis by competent persons.

9. PLANNED AND PROGRAMMED MAINTENANCE

Planned maintenance is work carried out on a planned basis to maintain the general condition of property and fittings provided by NH. This includes cyclical maintenance of the exterior of the building, communal areas, of Decent Homes key building components and the periodic servicing of certain equipment and installation. All planned maintenance work will be carried out in accordance with regulatory standards, relevant legislation, manufacturer's instructions, or good trade practice.

NH have a responsibility to repair and maintain and therefore are not obliged to carry out any improvements to their properties outside of those which are part of planned programmes of work.

10. APPOINTMENT TIMES

NH offer weekday appointments for the completion of repairs and pre and post inspections. The following options will be given:

- Morning: 8am to 1pm
- Afternoon: 12pm to 5pm
- Lunchtime: 11am to 2pm

10.1 Priority Categories

Timescales for the commencement and completion of works will be arranged within NH approved priority categories listed below. Extra consideration will be given to those residents who are vulnerable, such as those who are elderly (aged 70+), disabled or who live with children aged 6 months or younger.

Critical i.e., 4 hours attend to make safe; repair if possible; emergency repairs - attend and make safe within 24 hours. If possible complete. Any follow up work to be raised as a new job and placed within its appropriate category.

Urgent Repairs - Attend within 5 working days, complete within 5 working days.

Routine Repairs - Attend within 14 working days, complete within 14 working days.

Resident requests for appointments beyond these timescales will be accommodated except for emergency repairs.

10.2 Pre-Inspection

Some jobs will require a pre-inspection before the repair appointment can be arranged, to establish the extent of the works. These will be where the scope of the job is not known or if the diagnosis given by the resident is not detailed enough. Such inspections may be carried out by a surveyor or a nominated contractor representative. Staff will always advise where this is to be the case. Repairs will then be issued in the appropriate timescales or programmed in to planned or batched works.

11. QUALITY CONTROL

Quality control measures will be undertaken by the Association to ensure standard of workmanship being achieved by the repair contractors is satisfactory and the quantities being claimed are correct and appropriate. The Association's maintenance surveyors will inspect at least 10% of all works carried out with a value not exceeding £249.00 and will inspect 100% of all completed repair orders with a value of £250.00 and above. Completed works orders selected for quality control inspection will not be able to progress for payment until the Maintenance Surveyor has 'passed' the job as acceptable/correct. The Association will, where considered appropriate, employ consultant specialist experts to undertake independent quality audits where the Association does not have the expertise in-house i.e. invasive audit of gas maintenance.

12. NO ACCESS

Where requested, residents must allow for access to repairs. Where access cannot be gained for standard appointment, the repair will be passed back to the contact centre to be rescheduled.

Where the repair is an emergency or a health and safety matter then NH will continue to make contact. NH will try up to two times to rearrange access for a requested repair before the repair is cancelled. If not repairing poses a serious safety risk for other residents or the building, NH will take appropriate steps to gain access.

If by not permitting access for a pre-agreed appointment, NH experiences considerable cost and inconvenience, NH reserves the right to recharge the resident for the call-out cost. This will only be done once investigation has taken place into the circumstances or frequency of no access instances.

12.1 Roles & Responsibilities for Repairs

Residents	NH
To use and inhabit NH homes (internal and communal) and installations responsibly	To ensure that NH approved operatives work in a clean and tidy manner
To allow access for repair works for which NH is responsible	To show ID when attending resident homes
To maintain areas of the home for which they are responsible – in accordance with the conditions of the tenancy agreement.	To only enter a resident's home where a responsible adult is present, unless there is evidence of a clear risk to any person(s).
To ensure that a responsible adult is present for any repair appointment	To only carry out work that is stated on the work specification
To clear repair work area of personal items or valuables prior to a scheduled appointment.	To inform residents of what work is to be carried out in their home prior to the work commencing (except in emergencies)
To not obstruct or deny works to their home or the communal areas	To ensure that operatives work in a way that is healthy and safe; protecting themselves and the environment in which they are working
To be responsible for the repair or replacement of items in a property damaged due to neglect, carelessness or deliberate action on the part of the resident household or visitors. To pay any charges for such repairs that are undertaken by NH (see Re-Chargeable Repairs Policy)	To give advice and information on what work to their internal home has been done at the end of a scheduled visit and advise if further visits are required.

13. THE RIGHT TO REPAIR

In accordance with Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994, if a qualifying repair cannot be completed within an agreed timescale, the resident has the right to request our management team to instruct a second contractor to complete the work. Where the second attempt or second contractor also fails to complete the work within the agreed time NH will pay compensation to the resident. This statutory requirement applies to tenants with a secured tenancy. As a matter of courtesy, NH extends this right to all General Needs tenancies.

Application of this or similar payment to other customers lies at the discretion of the Service Manager.

13.1 The Right to Repair does not apply in the following circumstances:

- The resident has told NH that they no longer want the qualifying repair carried out.
- Where the resident fails to provide details for the contractor to gain access to their home
- Access for an inspection or for the repair to be carried out has not been provided.
- Where the contractor needs to order special parts to complete the repair
- Where severe weather conditions prevent the contractor from completing the repair

	Defect period described in working days
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	2
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 31 October and 1 May	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 30 April and 1 November	3
Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet pan (where only one in dwelling)	1
Blocked sink, bath or basin	3
Tap which cannot be turned	3
Leaking from water or heating pipe, tank or cistern	1
Leaking roof	1
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or handrail	3

13.2 Repair Responsibilities

Some repairs are the responsibility of the tenant and not NH; such repairs are defined within the NH Tenant Handbook and NH Re-Chargeable Repairs **Policy**, as well as the respective tenancy agreement.

14. FIXED FLOOR AND WALL COVERINGS

It is not advisable for residents to lay fixed floor coverings (tiles, hard wood or laminate) in their homes. This is due to the difficulty in removing them to carry out essential works such as under floor pipe work, without damaging the fixed covering. NH do not advocate the installation of fixed floor coverings. Where residents have installed fixed wall or floor coverings, they are responsible for obtaining the correct noise insulation, contents insurance cover and for removing them for works which NH deem essential. NH retains the right to recover costs of removing fixed floor or wall coverings from residents who have installed them, on their departure from the tenancy.

15. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

The Association has a responsibility to serve the needs and promote the interests of its entire staff and all its tenants / service group users. The Association will provide equal service in accordance with the Equality Act. The Association works towards developing services, facilities and working practices, which are equally accessible to and appropriate for all our customers, irrespective of their gender, age, race, sexuality, transgender, disability, religion, marital status /civil partnership or income.

A key element of the Equality standards involves carrying out an Equality Impact Assessment on all existing and, in particular, new policies to ensure they do not have an adverse impact on or have any that can be justified on a particular group. An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out to this policy and will be reviewed on a regular basis. The Association will make consideration for all identified vulnerable groups when conducting this service. At the discretion of the Association consideration will be given to all vulnerable groups, tailoring our service and customer needs. This will be dealt with case by case on an individual need basis.

Version	Date	Author	Reason
Version 1	11/2017	Property Services Manager	Last adopted
Version 2	11/2019	Property Services Manager	Inclusion of legislation and regulation, CDMC & Electrical. Presented for cyclical review.
Version 3	18/11/2021	Property Services Manager	Change of name from NUCHA to NH. Presented for cyclical review.
Version 4	06/11/2023	Property Services Manager	Change of priority for repairs.