ITEM 4 APPENDIX 3

REPORT TO:	**WECH Board**
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AUTHOR:	Scott Richardson, Head of Maintenance
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Scott Richardson	19 March 2025	26 March 2025	31 March 2028

Introduction

1.1 This document explains Walterton and Elgin Community Homes' Maintenance Policy. The policy overall will ensure an efficient, high quality and value for money service for all residents.

1.2 We are committed to responding promptly and courteously to all expressions of dissatisfaction and delivering a high standard of service.

1.3 We make sure our repairs and maintenance services meet all legal and regulatory requirements.

2. Aims

2.1 This policy applies to all of WECH's homes and communal areas where we have a responsibility for repairs under statute, regulation, or contractual obligation.

2.3 This policy applies to all colleagues, contractors and service providers acting on our behalf.

2.4 This policy aims to set out the principles of our repairs service for our colleagues and residents, enabling us to provide a seamless, high-quality and resident-focused repairs service for all. We aim to provide a good and reliable service to all our residents and to treat all feedback as an opportunity to improve services.

3. Definitions

3.1 For the purpose of this policy, we have defined the most frequently used terminology relating to repairs services provided by WECH.

- **Decent Homes Standard**: A Government standard which defines required standards for homes.
- **Planned maintenance:** A maintenance activity that has been planned, normally as part of an annual programme to maintain the structure or safety of a building and/or to replace a major component such as a kitchen, bathroom, or roof.
- **Rechargeable repair:** Any work order placed to remedy a problem which is a resident's responsibility because of wilful damage, neglect or vandalism by a member of the household, or a visitor of the resident.
- **Cyclical Maintenance:** Work done to maintain the general condition of the property and some communal fittings such as, external redecoration of a house or block of flats, internal decoration of communal areas such as stairwells and entrance halls and general repairs to boundary fences and paths etc.
- **Routine repair:** All standard responsive repairs.
- **Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018:** An Act to amend the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 to require that residential rented accommodation is provided and maintained in a state of fitness for human habitation, and for connected purposes.
- **Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS):** Places a legal duty on landlords to assess and regularly review the condition of their properties to ensure that properties are safe and free from hazards.
- **Responsive repairs or repairs:** A responsive repair is a repair reported by or on behalf of a resident. A responsive repair to an item that is already present but needs repairing or replacing, depending on what is necessary

4. Residents' responsibilities

4.1 Residents are responsible for ensuring that any furniture or other items (including floor coverings) do not impede our contractor in conducting responsive repair in any way. WECH staff and contractors will not move furniture on your behalf.

Reporting repairs

4.2 This section outlines the procedure for receiving and dealing with repairs:

(i) Tenants wishing to report a repair can contact WECH via the reception or by calling 020 7266 3347. Opening hours are Monday to Friday 9.30am 5:30 pm or via email at **maintenance@wech.org.uk**.

(ii) There will be an Out of Hours service for emergencies. The current number for out of hours emergencies is **0208 979 2220**.

Residents will get an update to say what's been ordered/supplier contacted and the target date for completion of the repair.

Service Level Agreements

4.3. Repairs are split into 3 categories:

- Responsive Repairs
- Cyclical Maintenance
- Asset Maintenance

4.4 Repairs fall into specific priority categories. When prioritising repairs, specific resident related issues will be considered where appropriate; where particular circumstances warrant it, priority times may be amended. The following categories are used to prioritise repairs:

Emergency	WECH will attend and complete the repair within 24 hours. These are repairs that need to be carried out to avoid serious danger to the health and safety of the occupants or where a failure to carry out the repair could cause extensive damage to buildings and property.
Urgent	WECH will respond and complete the repair within 5 days depending on the nature of the work required. These are repairs that may affect the comfort of residents and may cause damage to the property if not carried out urgently.
Routine	WECH will respond within 28 working days. These are repairs which are not urgent, although they may cause inconvenience to residents.
Planned	WECH will respond within 90 working days. This category is for work which does not need to be carried out straight away, but which is required for the long term upkeep of the property. This work will be specified, grouped together and carried out as part of a programme of works.

4.5 WECH will always endeavour to complete repairs within the given timescales. Routine repairs will normally be completed within 28 days, however, there may be occasions where this is not possible due to the resident not being available. Any extension to the 28-day timescale will be agreed with the resident.

4.6 In addition to meeting the above timescales, WECH will seek to ensure that all its contractors take a 'right first-time' approach to the completion of responsive repairs. Adopting this approach will minimise disruption for the resident, provide better value for money and improve satisfaction.

4.7 **When raising an order staff should consider:**

- What priority it is in terms of response times and access arrangements
- Accurate use of code and trade classification
- Current contractor workload (when allocating a job)
- In the case of specialist works, ensuring the work can be carried out by the contractor.
- Whether any member of the household is vulnerable.

Cyclical Maintenance

4.8 Annual maintenance includes work that, as a landlord, WECH are legally responsible to undertake, such as gas safety checks or works that help reduce the risk of equipment breaking down.

4.9 Cyclical maintenance are proactive and preventative works, including electrical safety checks, decoration of communal areas and other similar works. WECH will endeavour to ensure the areas and facilities within communal spaces are maintained to a good standard including all mechanical and electrical provisions.

4.10 Where scaffolding or works to communal areas are required for the purposes of cyclical maintenance work all resident will be given two weeks' notice. WECH will endeavour to carry out the cyclical maintenance works in a way that causes the least possible disruption and inconvenience to residents.

Planned Maintenance

4.11 Planned maintenance works will be planned and carried out to ensure the health and safety of residents and their visitors, and to maintain the standard of our properties in line with our Asset Management Strategy.

4.12 This type of maintenance is to meet statutory and legal obligations, and to prevent deterioration of the building components and/or improve the appearance of the properties.

4.13 Data obtained through undertaking stock condition surveys will help WECH with scheduling required larger planned maintenance works. An annual programme of planned maintenance works will be notified to residents whose properties are impacted by planned work.

4.14 Examples of planned maintenance include major repairs to homes and shared areas (e.g. kitchens, bathrooms, external building works such as roof replacements and communal windows).

4.15 Where scaffolding is needed or works to communal areas are required for planning maintenance, we will give at least two weeks' notice.

4.16 Expected minimum lifespan before an assessment for replacement is made:

Kitchens	**30 years**
Bathrooms	30 years
Windows	30 years
Boilers	20 years

4.17 If an item fails before the lifespan above is reached efforts to repair the item will be undertaken. Where it is deemed the failure is a direct result of residents' behaviour (or that of their family), then the cost of repair will be recharged.

Residents' Responsibilities

4.12 The following gives examples of who is responsible for which repairs:

Plumbing & Electrics

Defect	Landlord responsibility	Tenant responsibility	Refer to your tenancy
Blocked drains caused by broken or failed pipework	✓		
Repair gutters and downpipes	✓		
Electrical sockets and light switches that are provided by WECH	✓		
Cleaning of extractor fans and ventilation hose		✓	
Blockages to gullies caused by unsuitable material		✓	

Blocked waste pipes caused by unsuitable materials or fat being poured into the drainage system		✓	
Gulley covers (and ensuring they are kept clear of leaves and debris)		✓	✓
Leaking pipework	✓		

Heating

Defect	Landlord responsibility	Tenant responsibility	Refer to your tenancy
You're heating if it breaks down	✓		
Radiators and storage heaters	✓		
Water leaks from your heating system	✓		
Bleeding radiators (seek advice if you do not feel confident in doing this yourself)		✓	
Letting us in so we can carry out a gas service each year if there is a gas supply to your home		✓	✓

Kitchens and bathrooms

Defect	Landlord responsibility	Tenant responsibility	Refer to your tenancy
Sanitary fixtures including basins, toilets and baths (but not cosmetic repairs or damages caused by tenant misuse)	✓		
Gaps between floors and skirting in the kitchen or bathroom	✓		

Floor coverings including vinyl in kitchen and bathroom	✓		
Maintenance of kitchen units	✓		
Sealing around sinks and baths	✓		
Toilet seats, shower hoses, toilet roll holders		✓	
Replacement of plugs/chains to baths and basins		✓	
Replacement of tap washers	✓		

Appliances

Defect	Landlord responsibility	Tenant responsibility	Refer to your tenancy
Boilers	✓		
Water/gas/electricity supply between meter and property	✓		
Tenant's own installations/appliances/ improvements/extensions		✓	✓
Replacement of smoke alarm	✓		
Replacing batteries of a smoke alarm		✓	

General maintenance & decor

Defect	Landlord responsibility	Tenant responsibility	Refer to your tenancy

Internal decorations		✓	
Minor cracks in plaster		✓	
Gaps between floors and skirting		✓	
Floor coverings in all other rooms except the kitchen and bathroom.		✓	
Repairing and replacing everyday items such as fuses and light bulbs		✓	
Disability adjustments such as stair lifts and shower seats.		✓	
Handrails and bannisters for stairs	✓		

Windows and doors

Defect	Landlord responsibility	Tenant responsibility	Refer to your tenancy
Internal glazing panels		✓	
Glazing of internal fire door	✓		
Door and window opening/closing mechanisms	✓		
Draught excluders		✓	
Maintenance of one lock to your main door	✓		
Repair/ replacement of extra locks, doorbells, letterboxes, spy holes, door knockers in street properties		✓	✓
Window cleaning		✓	✓

Keys and door handles		✓	
Oiling locks and hinges		✓	
Intercoms or bells (only on estates)	✓		
Adjustment of doors to clear new rugs or carpets		✓	
Unsecure external doors, frames and panels	✓		

External maintenance

Defect	Landlord responsibility	Tenant responsibility	Refer to your tenancy
Steps and paths leading from the property boundary to your main entrance door	✓		
Paving in a street property which is not the main path to your door		✓	
Dustbins in a street property		✓	
Garden maintenance including, hedge and tree trimming		✓	✓
Pruning trees to prevent accident or disrepair	✓		
Boundary walls and fences between two WECH properties or that border public areas or footpaths	✓		✓
Roofs, Chimneys, guttering and downpipes	✓		

Pest Control

Defect	Landlord responsibility	Tenant responsibility	Refer to your tenancy
Pest control, disinfestations, removal of bird of bee nests of birds **		✓	
Pest control in all internal and external communal spaces	✓		✓

** We'll deal with mice, fleas, bedbugs and wasps if you've been unsuccessful in dealing with the issues yourself, or where there is evidence of a wider infestation in a block. Homeowners are responsible for clearing any pests or infestations within their property.

WECH will decline to provide repair services in the following circumstances:

- The item was installed by the resident
- The fault is due to resident's negligence
- The fault is relating to an item that has been gifted
- The resident has undertaken works without prior consent
- The resident has undertaken works with prior consent but has not met all guidelines
- The resident has undertaken works that compromised manufacturer warranties

Maintenance and service recharges apply whether the defect has been caused by a resident or their visitors.

5. Asbestos

5.1 Where intrusive works on building structures are necessary, WECH will provide guidance, information and advice to staff members, contractors and residents to avoid anyone being exposed to the dangers of asbestos.

5.2 Where suspect asbestos material is identified that presents a significant risk, WECH will inform the relevant Health and Safety Executive at the earliest opportunity. WECH will seek advice from the approved consultant and appropriate action will be taken.

5.3 All WECH trades staff and contractors undergo regular asbestos awareness training in line with current regulations and health and safety policies.

6. Service Standards

6.1 We promise that we will treat our residents and their homes with respect at all times.

6.2 We will only use professional operatives who take pride in their work and are suitably qualified and competent to complete the work they have been asked to do.

6.3 Our staff and contractors will always provide proof of identity before entering a resident's home.

6.4 We will try to offer a mutually acceptable appointment at the first point of contact.

6.5 We will always try to fully complete the repair on the first visit and be clear about what will happen next if a second visit is required. We will keep the resident fully informed of progress.

7. Repairs for vulnerable tenants

7.1 We know that some of our tenants are vulnerable and at greater risk of harm because of their vulnerability in relation to disrepair or damage to their home and we prioritise these repair cases. We will only carry out these works where we have been advised and recorded on our database that the resident has a registered vulnerability

7.2 We have a record of the vulnerability of some of our tenants. However, we understand that residents' need's change over time, therefore we encourage residents to tell us about any circumstances such as a hearing impairment or mobility restriction when reporting a fault so that we can prioritise it appropriately. We can record this information for any future repairs only if we are specifically asked to by the resident in line with data protection.

8. Post Work inspections

8.1 We aim to carry out the following proportions of post-inspections:

- 10% of all repairs costing below £500
- 50% of all repairs costing between £500-£1000
- 100% of all repairs costing more than £1000

8.2 WECH will deliver a service that complies with regulatory and statutory obligations to ensure the health, safety and security of people and property are always maintained.

9.Rechargeable Repairs

9.1 The decision to recharge a resident is at our own discretion. We will take a case-by-case and fair approach when deciding to recharge a resident, considering any representations made and the costs that may arise from pursuing a recharge.

9.2 Where damage is not deliberate, it is in our interests to carry out repairs without expending resources on recovering recharges. We will always try to find a positive solution, which does not add unnecessary debt to our residents.

10. Tenants Right to Repair

10.1 We adhere to the 'right to repair' legislation which ensures that emergency or urgent repairs that may affect the tenant's health, safety or security and cost less than £250 are carried out within a set time frame.

10.2 A list of the "qualifying repairs" and timescales we must complete repairs by can be found below. Where we don't complete the repair within the specified time and there is no good reason for the delay the tenant can ask for a second contractor to complete the work.

10.3 3 If the second contractor does not finish the works within the new time limit the tenant may be entitled to compensation of £10 immediately with a further £2 per day for every working day the repair remains outstanding, up to a maximum of £50. This is in accordance with the Right to Repair Regulations 1994. Where the tenant has rent arrears, compensation would be deducted from their arrears.

10.4 The following must be noted:

- You can only carry out repairs that do not affect WECHs contractor warrantees
- You must initially report the overdue repair to WECHs Maintenance & Repairs Team so that WECH will have a chance to make things right.

11. Legislation

11.1 We make sure that our homes comply with the Decent Homes Standard (as a minimum). We ensure our homes have modern facilities, are in a reasonable state of repair and warm and weatherproof.

11.2 All WECH programmes of planned and cyclical maintenance, including our stock condition survey as well as the retrofit programme seek to replace and/or improve components and/or services to ensure properties continue to meet the Decent Homes Standard when we undertake responsive repairs on them. The standard does not apply to leasehold and shared ownership properties.

11.3 The Housing Health and Safety Rating System is an important part of the regulatory framework governing our responsive repairs service. Where a hazard or any risk associated with the HHSRS assessment system is highlighted by staff, contractors or third-party agencies, we will address any works needed as part of the responsive repairs service. We are required to ensure that our properties, including where we are responsible for any common parts of the building, are fit for human habitation at the beginning of the tenancy and throughout. We refer to the WECH lettings standard that clarifies on our approach to ensure a positive impact on resident satisfaction and the quality of our homes.

11.4 As the landlord, we will ensure that our repairs and maintenance service acts in accordance with best practice and statutory requirements as follows:

- Occupiers Liability Act 1957
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Housing Act 1985, 1988, 1996 and 2004
- Landlord & Tenant Act 1985 (Section 11)
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Electrical Equipment (Safety) Regulations 1996
- Gas Safety (Installations and Use) Regulations 1998
- Decent Homes Standard 2006
- Regulator of Social Housing's regulatory framework, 2015
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022
- Responsive Repairs Policy
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Equality Act 2010
- Pre-Action Protocol for Housing Condition Claims (England)
- Any other relevant legislation in which we are legally bound to comply with when providing a repair service.