



## Repairs and Maintenance Standards policy

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*for you – for your community – not for profit*

## **Repairs and Maintenance Standards Policy**

### **1. Statement of Intent.**

- 1.1 Two Rivers Housing (TRH) is aware that the delivery of an efficient and effective repairs and maintenance service is critical in determining tenant satisfaction with TRH's service and essential to the proper management of its housing stock. Two Rivers Housing aims to ensure that it provides a repairs and maintenance service which is efficient, which properly discharges its obligations to tenants, is responsive to their needs and requirements and which achieves value for money.
- 1.2 Two Rivers Housing will visit each of its tenants after the transfer of stock has taken place to assess the maintenance needs of each property. TRH will subsequently develop a planned maintenance strategy in order to minimize the amount of responsive repairs it needs to undertake. This strategy will be reviewed annually.
- 1.3 Two Rivers Housing will ensure that staff involved in delivering the repairs and maintenance service have the necessary skills, training and experience to order and specify repairs, to manage and monitor service delivery and to plan and develop an effective repairs and maintenance strategy. Two Rivers Housing will implement procedures which guarantee the proper management and monitoring of all repairs and maintenance contractors.
- 1.4 Two Rivers Housing will ensure that this policy and the procedures attached to it are implemented in accordance with TRH's Customer Care Policy. To this end, it has:
  - (i) implemented an appointments system for the carrying out of repair work;
  - (ii) aim to adhere to the priority timescales described in this policy for the completion of repair work and ensure that all tenants are aware of these timescales;
  - (iii) ensure all contractors undertaking housing repairs abide by a code of conduct designed to ensure high standards of customer care;
  - (iv) monitor tenant satisfaction with the repairs service and ensure any complaints about the service are investigated promptly. Complaints will be used to inform improvements that are made to the service.
  - (v) introduced a free Handyperson service.
- 1.5 Two Rivers Housing will ensure that all tenants are treated equally in respect of the repair and maintenance of their homes, and that all tenants have equal access to this service. This policy and the procedures attached to it will be implemented in accordance with TRH's Equality and Diversity Policy.

## **2. Responsive Repairs**

- 2.1 Two Rivers Housing will ensure that all of its employees are aware of its' repair responsibilities. Training and guidance will be provided to ensure that all employees are capable of assessing and requesting non-technical repair work accurately.
- 2.2 Two Rivers Housing has detailed procedures for the management of response repairs.
- 2.3 Information about procedures for ordering repairs will be made available to all tenants in the Tenants Handbook. When ordering a repair, tenants will be provided with a receipt, detailing the repair that has been ordered, the timescale for carrying out the repair and information about TRH's complaints procedure.
- 2.4 The repair responsibilities of Two Rivers Housing and tenants respectively are set out in Appendix Two of this policy.
- 2.5 When a repair is of a non-emergency nature and will form part of a planned maintenance or capital works programme, the work will be deferred if it is assessed that this is an appropriate course of action. The tenant will be informed of the programme timetable and any necessary repair to ensure their health and safety in the meanwhile.

## **3. Repair Timescales and Right to Repair**

- 3.1 Two Rivers Housing will aim to complete repairs within agreed timescales, set out in Appendix One, which it will publicise to all of its tenants. These timescales match those set out in the Right to Repair Regulations 1994, but with some additional works included.
- 3.2 Two Rivers Housing will respond to emergency repairs within 2 hours and make safe and complete the work within 24 hours. It will publicise its arrangements for dealing with out of hours emergency repairs to all of its tenants. A repair is deemed an emergency if there is a high risk to the health and safety of tenants or their visitors, or a repair is required to safeguard the property itself.
- 3.3 Where work is not completed within the specified timescale, the tenant may, in certain circumstances, use the Right to Repair. Two Rivers Housing will publicise the Right to Repair to its tenants.

#### **4. Rechargeable Works**

- 4.1 Where a tenant is responsible for damage to their property or disrepair, Two Rivers Housing may carry out the repair work and recharge it to the tenant. Similarly, on occasion, Two Rivers Housing may carry out repair work on behalf of a leaseholder, where they request it, and recharge them for the work.
- 4.2 Outgoing tenants will be expected to remove any non-standard items from their properties upon departure. If such items are not removed, Two Rivers Housing will remove them and recharge the outgoing tenant for the cost of the work. Alternatively, where the in-coming tenant requests it, non-standard items will be left in the property and they will be given responsibility for maintaining them.

#### **5. Code of Conduct**

- 5.1 All staff involved in the delivery of the repairs service, including officers of Two Rivers Housing and employees of any contractors used by Two Rivers Housing, will be expected at all times to treat tenants with courtesy and respect. They will be expected to ensure that no damage is caused to tenants' belongings in the course of carrying out work, and to leave tenants' properties clean and tidy following the completion of work.
- 5.2 Two Rivers Housing has a Code of Conduct for Contractors addressing the above and other issues. All Two Rivers Housing employees and contractors will be expected to abide by it.

#### **6. Implementation**

- 6.1 Members of the Housing Services and Development Committee, the Chief Executive and the Operations Director are responsible for ensuring that this policy is implemented.
- 6.2 It is the responsibility of all of Two Rivers Housing's employees to ensure that this policy and the procedures related to it are properly implemented.
- 6.3 Two Rivers Housing will provide training for staff dealing with repairs and maintenance issues in order to ensure that this policy is implemented by experienced and qualified staff.
- 6.4 Two Rivers Housing will involve its tenants in key decisions about the service, for example contract specification, re-tendering of contracts and so on.

## **7. Monitoring**

- 7.1 Tenant satisfaction surveys will be used for monitoring all repairs that are carried out. Other methods of seeking tenants' views, including consultation with established tenants' groups and sample surveys, will also be used to obtain feedback from tenants on the repairs and maintenance service.
- 7.2 Two Rivers Housing's officers will post inspect a selection of repairs work to ensure that any problems relating to the quality of workmanship by contractors can be resolved at an early stage.
- 7.3 Two Rivers Housing will introduce a performance monitoring and review system. This will establish standards for service delivery and contractor performance. Tenants will be required to notify Two Rivers Housing of poor contractor performance within seven days of the completion of repairs work. Levels of tenant satisfaction will be a key determinant in assessing the quality of the service. Information relating to previous performance will be used to review the list of contractors used by TRH.
- 7.4 Two Rivers Housing will ensure that the terms of its contracts are enforced and will use appropriate mechanisms to deal with defaulting contractors, including dismissal.

## **8. Review**

- 8.1 The Housing Services and Development Committee will be responsible for ensuring that reviews of this policy are carried out.
- 8.2 Two Rivers Housing will undertake regular reviews of this policy, the procedures related to it and staff training needs, to ensure that it continues to operate in line with best practice and that service improvements are implemented. A review will be carried out after the first year of operation and then at intervals of not more than 3 years, or such other periods as the Housing Services and Development Committee may from time to time decide.
- 8.3 There will be an automatic review of this policy whenever there is a change of policy or from the government or the Housing Corporation, or there is a change to legislation. The policy will also be reviewed when other information becomes available that will impact on the policy, such as the outcome of a Best Value review.

## **APPENDIX ONE**

### **Repair timescales**

#### **One working day repairs**

Certain repairs will be dealt with within 24 hours. These include:

- Total loss of electric power
- Unsafe power or lighting socket or electrical fitting
- Total loss of water supply
- Total or partial loss of gas supply
- Blocked flue to open fire or boiler
- Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 31st October and 1<sup>st</sup> May
- Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack or toilet pan
- Toilet not flushing where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling
- Leaking from water or heating pipe, tank or cistern
- Insecure external window, door or lock
- Loss of electric power to communal lights
- Defective communal lighting
- Defective fire doors or glazing in fire door
- Blocked flues
- Serious water penetration
- Force entry and change locks
- Removal of obscene and racist graffiti from the Two Rivers Housing properties.

#### **Five working days repairs**

Repairs that will be dealt with within five working days include:

- Partial loss of electric power, including defective power points, sockets etc.
- Partial loss of water supply
- Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 30<sup>th</sup> April and 1<sup>st</sup> November
- Blocked sink, bath or basin
- Tap that cannot be turned on or off

- Loose or detached banister or hand rail
- Rotten timber flooring or stair tread
- Some void property repairs, for example gas and electric checks
- Void Property repairs/replacements
- Blocked or leaking rainwater gulley
- Broken W.C. seat and fittings
- Defective ball valve
- Gain access or attend to faulty garage door
- Non-urgent check electrics or electrical repair/replacement
- Reinstatement works following water/fire damage
- Non serious water penetration problems
- Missing manhole cover
- Defective immersion heater (if not sole hot water source)
- Non serious re-glazing in dwelling
- Remedy faulty/leaking stopcock
- Leaking roof
- Door entry phone not working
- Mechanical extractor fan in kitchen or bathroom not working

## **20 working days repairs**

Repairs carried out within 20 working days include:

- Blocked or broken gutters and down pipes
- Refix chimney pot or cowl
- Refix or renew roof tile or slate (if no serious water penetration)
- Repair or ease external and internal doors or frames
- Repair or ease windows, frames or fittings
- Replace or repair bath, basin sink, waste, fittings or brackets (if not in serious condition otherwise five working days to apply).
- Repair/renew bath panel
- Repair/renew window sill
- Remedy defective plastering
- Extensive repairs and redecoration of void properties
- Joinery repairs not specified elsewhere, e.g. kitchen fittings, draining boards and so on

## **40 working day repairs**

All other non-urgent repairs not listed above, for example paths, fencing, gates, rendering, re-pointing, and so on.



## APPENDIX 2

### Two Rivers Housing responsibilities

Two Rivers Housing's repair responsibilities are:

#### Repairs & decorating

We will repair and make good the items set out below. If work is needed because of damage caused by you or someone visiting or living with you, you will be charged the costs we incur in having the work carried out.

#### 1. Repairing of structure

The items we are responsible for include:

- drains, gutters, fascias and bargeboards, sewers and external pipes (except where the drains and sewers are the responsibility of the water authority, when we will report the defects to that authority);
- the roof and foundations;
- outside walls, outside doors, windowsills, window handles, window catches, sash cords and window frames (including painting and decorating outside);
- inside walls, floors and ceilings, and skirting boards (not including painting and decorating inside your home);
- chimneys, chimney stacks and flues but not including sweeping them except for the annual service by us.
- doors and door frames including door furniture, floors and ceilings, excluding decoration;
- balconies, walkways, hallways, steps or other means of access including disabled access which we have provided or for which we have accepted responsibility;
- external and internal plaster work;
- garages, outbuildings and stores that form part of your property;
- boundary walls, gates and fences, if they exist at the start of the tenancy or are later erected by us, adjoining footpaths, rights of way, garage accessways or any roads not maintained by the local authority;
- paths, passageways and alleys owned by us.

#### 2. Repairs inside your home

We will be responsible for:

- repairing and maintaining any equipment we have provided for

heating, hot water and sanitation.

- electric wiring including sockets, light fittings and switches but excluding plugs, bulbs, fluorescent tubes and starters;
- water heaters, fireplaces, fitted fires and central-heating systems (if they are fitted by us) and gas pipes;
- plumbing for washing machines (except flexible pipe connection);
- cracked or broken glass, if it is not your fault or the fault of a member of your household or a visitor;
- smoke detectors (if they are fitted by us);
- making good any damage to decorations following repairs we have carried out to your home;
- communal TV aerials and socket outlets;
- floor tiles we have laid
- toilet seats (unless damaged by you or a member of your household or your visitors).

We will not be responsible for maintaining any equipment replaced by you, or if the equipment is non-standard and was fitted by a former tenant and left in your home at your request.

### **3. Repair and cleaning of common parts and communal areas you share with other people**

We will repair any lifts and equipment in communal areas. We will clean any outside communal areas you share with other tenants where we make a service charge for cleaning including, but not limited to, entrance halls,, stairways, stair lifts, passage ways, rubbish chutes, lighting and other amenities provided for common use, or in the case of sheltered housing, where we provide a cleaning service.

### **4. Decorating the outside of your home**

We will keep the outside of your home and the common parts inside that you share with other tenants in a good state of decoration.

The Tenants' Handbook contains further information about our repair responsibilities.