



Bexley Churches Housing Association Maintenance Policy

1. Introduction

1.1 BECHA is committed to maintaining all its properties to a high standard, ensuring the accommodation reflects positively on both the tenants and the Association.

1.2 BECHA aims to:

- Meet all its statutory and contractual obligations, especially relating to gas and electricity checks.
- Achieve recognised good practice standards.
- Provide a responsive and effective service to tenants, obtaining regular feedback from tenants on the performance of both the Association and the contractors.
- Ensure that repairs and maintenance are of a high standard and represent good value for money.

1.3 BECHA will undertake maintenance of its properties under one of the following four main categories:

- Day to day Maintenance, or Minor repairs
- Voids Maintenance
- Cyclical Maintenance
- Planned Maintenance, or Major Repairs

2. Day to Day Maintenance, or Minor Repairs

2.1 The definition of Minor Repairs that we will use is that defined by the Housing Corporation for the Regulatory & Statistical Return.

2.2 There are three sub-categories to minor repairs that we will use, as follows:

- Emergency repairs
- Urgent repairs
- Routine repairs

2.3 We will aim to complete minor repairs within the following timescales:

- Emergency repairs – within 24 hours of them being reported to the office

- Urgent repairs – within 5 working days of them being reported to the office
- Routine repairs – within 10 working days of them being reported to the office
- 6 week orders – these will be used for those where there is no urgency, such as minor tree works.
- Agreed timescale – where the tenant wishes to have the work carried out at a time they want.

2.4 At all times we will encourage our contractors to make an appointment with the tenants in order that the works are undertaken at a time that is convenient to them, but within the above timescales.

2.5 If minor repairs have been identified that are not the responsibility of the Association, as defined within the tenancy agreement, this will be the tenant's responsibility to repair. We will undertake the work, if the tenant so desires, having first advised them of an approximate amount, and then re-charge them the full amount. [See also the Rechargeable Repairs Policy].

3. Voids maintenance

3.1 Whenever a property is vacated, we will carry out an inspection promptly to determine what needs to be undertaken before letting it again.

3.2 We will ensure all relevant tests are done to meet the gas and electricity safety regulations.

3.3 Where only minor repairs are needed prior to letting, we will aim to have these completed within 10 working days, in order to re-let the property within the target timescale [see Lettings Policy].

3.4 Until the Association complete all the works to comply with the Decent Homes Standard, wherever possible we will use the void period to upgrade the property to the required standard. Once these works have been identified and while they are being carried out, this property will be recorded as 'Unavailable to Let'.

4. Cyclical Maintenance

4.1 This is work that needs to be done on a regular cycle, and includes the following

- External decorations to all our properties
- Checking and clearing of gutters, gullies and down pipes
- Internal decorations of the communal areas where they exist in our properties
- Gas safety checks

4.2 We will carry out a rolling five-year programme of cyclical decorating, and an annual programme of gas safety checks.

4.3 We will carry out an inspection of all gutters, gullies etc at the same time as carrying out the external decorations. Where any of our properties do not have any external decorations needing to be done, this inspection will still go ahead on a five-year programme.

5. Planned Maintenance, or Major Repairs

5.1 Until the year 2010, we will prioritise this category to accomplishing the Decent Homes Standard.

5.2 Each year, we will aim to have a programme of works in place that will ensure this standard is reached within the target time.

5.3 We will undertake a Stock Condition Survey on a regular basis every five to ten years, which will be used in conjunction with an asset management strategy to:

- Keep as many properties as possible lettable for as long as possible
- Provide a good service to tenants and maintain a high standard of accommodation
- Preserve the association's assets and protect investments
- Set achievable and affordable targets for maintenance
- Improve control over maintenance expenditure.

6. Budget and Authorisation

6.1 Each year we will set a budget for each of the different categories of repairs, which will be set by the Committee and monitored on a monthly basis by the Director.

6.2 The Committee delegates the expenditure of this budget to the Director as per the prevailing Financial Regulations.

6.3 Minor repairs by their nature will be generally of such an amount that we will place an order with the relevant approved contractor. But where larger amounts need to be spent, we will follow the tender procedures as detailed in the Financial Regulations.

6.4 All Cyclical and Major Repairs will be tendered to a minimum of three contractors. The tenders will include a detailed specification of works that need to be included. At all times the Financial Regulations and the Tender Procedure will be followed.

7. Monitoring

7.1 Each year Committee will set targets that are challenging but realistic

7.2 We will monitor and report on the following:

- Expenditure of each of the repair categories against the budget, explaining any significant variances

- Tenant satisfaction with Minor Repairs, Cyclical and Major Repairs, by means of tenant satisfaction forms issued with copies of the orders placed.
- Contractors' performance.
- Numbers of repairs completed within pre-set target times.
- The quality of the work undertaken, by inspecting at least 10% of all orders completed worth less £1,000 and all orders over this amount.
- Any complaints relating to repairs

8. Authorised Contractors

8.1 We will maintain a list of Approved Contractors that will be reviewed and approved by Committee on an annual basis.

8.2 In order for a contractor to be accepted onto this list, they must be able to demonstrate:

- They have adequate public and employers liability insurance.
- They are good employers with a high awareness of all relevant health and safety and equal opportunities/diversity issues.
- Their employees are appropriately qualified and if appropriate registered.
- They can demonstrate a high quality standard of work.
- They have the relevant tax forms in place.