



Responsive Repairs Policy

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cill Dara Housing Association (CDHA) will ensure it delivers a high-quality and effective repairs service that is customer-focused and based on the principles of a balance between quality and cost.
- 1.2 We have developed this policy to direct and support service delivery in line with our vision and mission:

Cill Dara's vision is to provide the people of Kildare with a safe and supported home environment.

Our mission is to identify and meet the housing and associated support needs of members of the Kildare community who are eligible for social and affordable housing.

2.0 Scope of Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to internal and communal areas in CDHA-owned properties. The policy will also apply to homes that CDHA manages on behalf of other landlords, provided that the landlord has agreed to this policy. Where a landlord has agreed alternatives, such as enhanced standards, we will endeavour to follow those and work within the spirit of this policy.
- 2.2 There are separate policies that cover repairs to empty homes, work relating to health and safety obligations on landlords and where tenants have done wilful damage or beyond normal wear and tear, for which they are recharged.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 CDHA recognises that responsive repairs are a key to having successful relationships between tenants and landlords. Poorly delivered repairs have negative impact on customer satisfaction, raise complaints and often result in wasted resources.
- 3.2 Our objectives are to:
 - a. Deliver great, consistently good and modern repairs service.
 - b. Protect the value of our capital assets.
 - c. Ensure that customers' homes remain safe, habitable and sustainable.
 - d. Comply with legal and statutory requirements.
 - e. Meet diverse needs of customers and ensure that the service is accessible and convenient.

- f. Promote a culture of completing repairs 'right first time' to achieve excellence, value for money and efficiencies.
- g. Demonstrate effective contractor management.
- h. Achieve high levels of customer satisfaction.

4.0 Policy Statement

Well maintained homes and effective processes for responding to day-to-day repairs will help us to keep building structures and components in good working order, maintain the quality of communal areas and protect estates and neighbourhoods.

4.1 Ensuring that ready to let homes meet the requirements contained in the Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2019 that set out obligations of landlords.

4.2 CDHA will deliver an effective repairs service by:

- a. Clarifying the respective repairs responsibilities of CDHA and tenants.
- b. Setting out the standard of service that residents can expect from us for completion of different types of repairs.
- c. Offering customers a wide range of ways in which to report repairs.
- d. Supporting our staff to diagnose repairs at the first point of contact whenever possible to help deliver 'right first time' approach.
- e. Meeting individual needs and preferences where possible, for example attending to repairs to suit customers.
- f. Offering repairs appointments through our contractors for diagnosis of repairs where pre=works surveys are necessary to assess and specify work.
- g. Keeping customers informed about any delays in progressing work, for example where parts are not immediately available.
- h. Assessing the quality of work done by external contractors by monitoring recalls and defects.

4.3 We will also:

- a. Ensure health and safety of customers, staff and contractors when carrying out repairs.
- b. Make sure that CDHA and contractors have the required levels of insurance to protect staff and tenants.
- c. Effectively manage planned and cyclical works programmes to help keep homes in good condition and reducing the need for responsive repairs where possible.

- d. Seek continuous improvement through robust monitoring of internal processes and contractors and assessing customer satisfaction with the repairs service.

4.4 We will deliver this policy by:

- a. Developing effective procedures for letting customers know our service standards and repair obligations.
- b. Guiding and supporting staff to deal with repair requests, arrange work and ensure timely completion.
- c. Monitoring and learning from the complaints relating to repairs.
- d. Seeking the views of customers about their experience of the repairs service.

4.5 Repair priorities and timescales are as follows:

- a. **Emergency:** 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. Examples include loss of all electrical power in the property, loss of all heating and loss of all hot water in the property. Emergency repairs will be attended to between 4 to 24 hours of the defect being reported to CDHA. In some situations, it may be only possible to attend and make the situation safe and secure pending further attendance and full completion of the repair during normal working hours.
- b. **Urgent:** These are repairs that may affect the comfort of residents and may cause damage to the property if not carried out urgently. Examples of urgent repairs would include repair of leaking pipe in the property or unblock an outside drain. Urgent repairs will be completed within 5 working days of the repair being reported to CDHA.
- c. **Routine:** These are repairs that are not urgent, although they may cause inconvenience to residents. Examples would include easing an internal door, clearing an overflowing gutter. Routine repairs will be completed within 20 working days of the defect being reported to CDHA.
- d. **Major:** Whenever possible, these will be completed in 60 days where possible or carried out when associated planned and cyclical work takes place if this is more appropriate. This priority allows for better resource planning and programming of non-urgent and non-routine jobs. The category is for larger, substantial repairs which do not affect the tenants' day-to-day life or their use of the property or communal areas, for example replacement of guttering, boundary treatment and work where there are substantial associated costs such as for scaffolding to complete non-urgent jobs such as decorating and roof replacement.

4.6 Tenants can report emergency repairs during out of office by telephone or text. This service is available between 6pm and 9am each weekday and at any time during

weekends and bank holidays. In some situations, it may be only possible to attend and make the situation safe and secure pending further attendance and full completion of the repair during normal working hours. Emergencies will be attended to between 4 to 24 hours of the defect being reported to CDHA.

4.7 The types of emergencies we will deal with are:

- a. A fault that could lead of the death or injury of occupants, staff visitors or the public.
- b. Faults likely to cause extensive damage to a building.
- c. Faults relating to a contravention of health and safety regulations and could result in a danger to life and limb.

4.8 Where a repair is reported during out of office hours and the work does not meet the criteria for an emergency visit, the tenant will be advised that they will be contacted on the next working day to process the job.

4.9 CDHA will recharge a tenant for abortive visits where repairs cannot be completed because the tenant has not topped up gas, oil or other essential supplies needed to carry out the work.

4.10 CHDA reserves the right to recharge tenants for costs incurred if a repair results from wilful damage or damage that is beyond normal wear and tear. For work that does not compromise the property, the household or neighbours, CDHA will require the cost of the repair to be paid before it is carried out. If the tenant decides to carry out the work, CDHA may seek to inspect the work afterwards to ensure quality and assess any future maintenance implications.

4.11 We will also recharge if tenants fail to keep appointments for repairs or property inspections, whereby CDHA cannot access the property to evaluate and carry out the reported repair.

4.12 CDHA will 'post-inspect' work costing more than one thousand euros as part our quality assurance and contractor management arrangements.

4.13 CDHA will seek the views of tenants through routine customer satisfaction surveys and in-depth discussions to assess the overall quality of our work.

4.14 We will refund a tenant if they carry out a repair that is CDHA's responsibility and they have obtained our written permission before commencing work.

4.15 We will also refund a tenant if we have failed to carry out a repair that is our responsibility and we have failed to carry it out in a reasonable time.

5.0 Equality and Diversity

5.1 We will apply this policy consistently, fairly and with professionalism. It applies to all tenants, regardless of their age, gender, disability, gender reassignment/transgender,

marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or any other matter that may cause a person to be treated with injustice.

- 5.2 We will ensure that any communication barriers are dealt with appropriately, for example barriers caused by sensory impairment and non-English speaking skills.
- 5.3 We will be mindful of any circumstances relating to individual circumstances. Examples include fast-tracking certain repairs for disability-related works and offering repairs appointments to avoid school runs and regular medical appointments. We will do this on a case-by-case basis so that decisions are made on merit.
- 5.4 Our staff and contractors will ask tenants to ensure that an adult is in the property when we inspect or carry out work. If an adult is not present and children or vulnerable people are left alone in a property, CDHA will not carry out internal works and the tenant may be recharged for the failed appointment.
- 5.5 CDHA has a duty to protect staff and contractors. They will leave a property if a tenant, a member of their household or a visitor, behaves in an unreasonable manner.

6.0 Data Protection and Confidentiality

- 6.1 This policy will be operated in line with our Data Protection Policy, including sharing details of tenants names, addresses and specific circumstances with external contractors to provide an effective repairs service.

7.0 Complaints

- 7.1 If a tenant is unhappy with the quality of the repairs service, they must first contact us, outlining the issues. We will take this seriously and aim to complete the work or respond in reasonable period.
- 7.2 If the tenant remains unhappy, they must follow CDHA's Complaints Policy and Procedures.
- 7.3 If they remain unhappy after following the Complaints Policy, they can ask Residential Tenancies Board to consider their complaint and seek for a resolution to the dispute.
- 7.4 Some aspects of the enforcement of the legal Minimum Standards for rental accommodation is dealt with by Local Authorities. Tenants can request the Local Authority to inspect issues. A Local Authority could enforce the landlord to comply with the Housing (Standards for Rented Housing) Regulations.

8.0 Compliance

- 8.1 We have developed this policy and associated procedures with due regard to Regulatory requirements and key legislation.
- 8.2 As a registered Tier 2 Approved Housing Body, we work hard to ensure that we are fully compliant with the requirements of the Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority.
- 8.3 The Performance Standard for Approved Housing Bodies requires us to we have effective delivery arrangements for the repairs service including:
 - a. Prioritising and addressing urgent repairs.
 - b. Having effective and proportionate systems for recording repairs histories and costs.
 - c. Having an annual budget to deliver the repairs service.
 - d. Using competent, insured and suitably qualified/accredited contractors and staff who carry out repairs.
 - e. Measuring and assessing the quality and cost of the repairs service.
- 8.4 Key legislation relating to this policy is as follows:
 - a. Housing (Regulation of Approved Housing Bodies) Act 2019
 - b. Housing (Standards for Rented Houses) Regulations 2017 and 2019
 - c. Fire Service Acts (1981 and 2003)

9.0 Linked Policies, Procedures and Guidance

- 9.1 The following CDHA strategies, policies, procedures and guidance that relate to this policy are as follows:
 - a. Repairs
 - b. Asset Management
 - c. Health and Safety
 - d. Income Management (Rechargeable Repairs)

10.0 Responsibilities

- 10.1 The CHDA Board will ensure that:
 - a. There is an annual budget for delivering the responsive repairs service.

- b. CDHA has an established system for assessing performance of the responsive repairs service
- 10.2 The Chief Executive has the overall responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring that procedures are put in place for effective service delivery and reporting.

11.0 Key Performance Indicators

11.1 The Board/relevant Committee monitors compliance with this policy at least once a quarter. Monitoring will include the following:

- Spend against budget.
- Average repair costs per property, broken down by property type and geography.
- Repairs appointments made for non-urgent works and proportion of appointments kept.
- Repairs completed at first visit to the property.
- Proportion of works completed within target time, broken down by repairs categories
- Proportion of post-inspections completed and pass rate.
- Proportion of complaints relating to responsive repairs and upheld/not upheld/referred to the Residential Tenancies Board.
- Customer satisfaction analysis and learning from complaints and surveys
- Rechargeable charges – debt and money received.

12.0 Policy Review

12.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or earlier to consider changes in legislation, regulation, service improvements and related initiatives.

