

Policy details

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Policy Statement

Co-op Homes aims to provide good quality affordable homes, deliver excellent services, and involve customers in making the decisions that affect their quality of life, so increasing their satisfaction.

We provide residents with a high quality repairs service which is easy and reliable to use. We want to ensure that all our properties are maintained in reasonable condition and that customers get a fair and consistent service from us. In order to achieve this, Co-op Homes has a planned maintenance programme to maintain homes in good condition. We call this our Asset Management Programme (AMP).

Co-op Homes will seek to achieve an appropriate balance between responsive and planned investment in its stock. This balance will alter over time to have a greater emphasis on planned rather than responsive investment. Co-op Homes has a programme of planned maintenance which:-

- Reviews the external condition of all homes on a 5 yearly cycle and takes action, where necessary, to repair, renew or redecorate elements which form part of the main fabric of the dwelling (e.g. roofs, windows, walls)
- Reviews the main services and equipment to our properties on a regular cycle (dictated by the needs of the services and service installations) and has in place a programme of servicing, repair and renewal to ensure that main services and equipment are maintained in good working order.
- Includes a programme of internal repair, upgrade and renewal to ensure that the internal fabric of our homes meets and maintains the Decent Homes Plus Standard, as a minimum, or any future standard put in place by Government.
- Includes any repair work which requires planning or co-ordination with other services in order to complete the work, or where the work cannot reasonably be completed within a 30 day period. The customer will be given a specific target date for completion of these programmed works.
- Includes provision to react to any change in legislation (such as frequency of safety checks) or direction by the RHP Group.
- Includes results of surveys arranged by the Technical Services Surveyor (TSS) to evaluate properties where stock condition data identifies potential lifecycle repairs, or where day-to-day component failures, or even customer complaint, suggest further investment may be necessary to deliver our policy in a cost effective way.
- Involves our residents when there are choices to be made, and priorities to establish.

Our Statutory Obligations

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) expects all Registered Providers of Social Housing (RPs) to develop and manage good quality homes that seek to meet people's needs and preferences now and in the future. This means that:

- Homes are well maintained and in a lettable condition, i.e:
 - meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing
 - provide a reasonable degree of thermal comfort
 - is in a reasonable state of repair
 - meet the current statutory minimum standard for housing
- Maintenance is carried out effectively and responsively and in ways that reflect residents' preferences
- Necessary investment in the future of the stock is a key priority
- Minimum standards are met in new development provision

Asset Management Programme (AMP)

Programmed repairs are works organised and carried out with forethought, control and the use of records to a predetermined plan. For Co-op Homes, this plan is the Asset Management Programme (AMP). Usually, these works are of higher value than individual responsive repairs and there is special budget provision for them agreed on a 3 year programme.

Co-op Homes' accepted approach to asset management is that programmed maintenance works should be based on a combination of stock condition, financial resources and customer priorities. From this combination, an Asset Management Programme (AMP) is produced every year to cover a three year forward period. This is reviewed formally every six months using information and feedback gathered from the responsive repairs service; customer comments and complaints; plus regular inspections undertaken by the Community Housing Advisors, the Technical Services Surveyor and our contractors.

We have a systematic approach to the renewing the components of our properties. It is all embracing, covering the external and internal elements. It also covers all mechanical and electrical plant and fixtures. Recommendations are made for renewal and /or maintenance of the various elements on a cyclical basis. Stock condition data is captured in our Omniledger housing management system, where the expected lifecycle of components, in order to maintain the Decent Homes Plus Standard, is also calculated. This detail is used to suggest investment priorities and likely survey targets, and also to raise issues in discussions with residents, and the Co-op Homes Board, to establish the Asset Management Programme.

All Capital Programme work is subject to survey by the Technical Services Surveyor or a contractor who will not be employed in carrying out the investment work prior to inclusion in the capital works programme.

A three year programme of works is presented to the Board for approval before the end of each financial year. It is publicised to our residents using the Co-op Homes website and through "Word on the Street". The Asset Management Programme includes work that may be part of a one-off investment programme, e.g. the installation of new boilers, but can

also include cyclical work carried out on a regular time specific basis, e.g. external painting. As the programme continues, more and more work will be regarded as cyclical repairs, but there will always be occasions of unexpected component failure, damage, resident expectation or sudden changes in legislation, which will interrupt a regular cycle. Our work will always require a balance of planned and cyclical maintenance to anticipate component failure, offer better value for money and minimise the need for more expensive, and disruptive, response maintenance. This programme is updated every six months with Board approval.

Meeting Residents' Needs

Customers will be kept informed about our investment plans and can become involved with shaping decisions. Asset management programming is subject to annual consultation with our residents within the Customer Focus Group (CFG). At the first meeting of the year, the CFG reviews the AMP for the forthcoming year and feedback they provide is used for its ongoing development. The agreed AMP is also advertised in the residents' newsletter and on the company's website. Residents also have control of a specific element of the AMP, namely the Environmental Improvements Budget from which they can bid for funding of a particular environmental or estate concern, and can raise complaints or matters needing attention via the Community Housing Officer and at the CFG meetings.

Residents will always be informed about, and will be involved with, work that is scheduled for their homes. They will be offered choices regarding colours and finishing when these are available and practical. The Technical Services Surveyor (TSS) and Community Housing Advisor (CHA) will liaise with them throughout the process of improvement work on their homes. Tenants can opt out of having any work done that does not have a wider Health and Safety implication, or does not involve a statutory landlord obligation, e.g. in connection with any gas replacement requirement. Resident satisfaction with the improvements made and the way the work was carried will also always be monitored and entered onto Omniledger and the project scheme files.

Successful delivery of the Asset Management Programme will meet the organisation's asset management requirements whilst also fulfilling tenant aspirations. It will ensure that our housing portfolio is maintained efficiently and effectively, and help increase resident satisfaction. A robust programme, delivered to schedule, or even earlier than originally timetabled, to a high standard and within budget, will help to further improve customer satisfaction. Planned works e.g. the replacement of boilers and windows and doors bring tangible benefits to our residents, by improving energy efficiency and increasing the level of disposable income available to them.

Financial Control

The procurement and control of programmed repairs is covered within the Financial Standing Orders (FSO) – in particular Regulations 18, 21, 22 and 23. Overall responsibility for the approval of systems for ordering goods and services remains with the Finance Director. No order can be given for works, goods or services unless the cost is covered in the approved budget or other provisions of the Financial Regulations.

Orders for works, goods or services should be the within the approved budget or approved under the non-budget authority limits of FSO 13.0. Only the Managing Director, Financial Director, Repairs & Maintenance Manager and Technical Services Surveyor can order works against the Capital Programme budget heading, within their individual constraints as

defined by the Financial Standing Orders (FSO).

Co-op Homes has an Approved Contractor List (ACL) for major and minor works contracts as approved by the Board from time to time. There is a laid down procedure for the Approved Contractors List as well as within Rule 18 of the FSO. Policies for the tendering and award of contracts are dealt with under Regulation 23 of the FSO.

All projects with potential upward cost variations over £20,000 or 20% of works, whichever is greater, are reported to the next Board meeting and, where possible for variations over £25,000, work or expenditure shall be stayed until authorised by the Chair or Treasurer in accordance with the FSO. All contracts are summarised and reported to the Board as part of regular progress reports on the planned maintenance programme.

The MD together with the FD & R&M have overall responsibility for keeping expenditure within budget limits. Authorisation is only delegated to more junior staff within specific limits defined in the FSO and where the principles of financial control are maintained, including the division of tasks.

Payments made to contractors are subject to controls within the FSOs. In order to ensure value for money, Co-op Homes operates a retention policy as a safeguard against shoddy delivery. Late or imperfect delivery can be subject to liquidated damages within the provisions of the JCT Minor Works contract format. All works are subject to a defects liability period during which the supplier will return to remedy an associated fault without cost to Co-op Homes.