



RESPONSE REPAIRS POLICY

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Version V1	23 May 2014	

LANGSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

RESPONSE REPAIRS POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

Langstane Housing Association is committed to providing good quality, affordable rented housing. In order to ensure that the properties we provide are kept to a high standard, a comprehensive repairs service is in place.

The main aim of the response repairs service is to ensure that our properties are well maintained, with repairs carried out when required, and giving our customers reasonable choices about when the work is done. The Association aims to get the repairs done right first time and provide a good value, reliable and customer-centred service.

In addition, the Association acknowledges the negative impact that poorly maintained properties can have on individual households and communities and aims to ensure that these are kept to a minimum. This will contribute to overall tenancy sustainability, and contribute to the successful letting of our vacant properties.

This policy defines the responsibilities and activities of the response repairs service. It also provides guidance to staff and customers in relation to what activities and services the repairs service covers and the standards and targets set out for the response repairs team.

The Association will at all times ensure that its policy and practices adhere to the obligations within legislation, and also reflect current good practice guidance and the requirements set by the Scottish Housing Regulator.

2. AIMS OF THE POLICY

The repairs service aims are shown below:

- To provide a warm, comfortable and safe home for tenants in well maintained neighbourhoods
- To provide an efficient repairs service which meets the requirements of the customer and gets the job done right first time, and on time
- To ensure that the Association aims to get value for money in repairs activities
- To provide the customer with a full range of information in relation to the repairs service to ensure transparency and accountability
- To ask for customer feedback on repairs and use this to drive continuous improvement

- To ensure that there are processes in place to ensure that the repairs service is monitored regularly to ensure the team standards are being met
- To develop the service in ways which ensure that the customer has the opportunity to tell the Association what they want, and when they want it
- To provide quarterly performance information to customers and also to the Management Team and the Tenant's Services Sub-Committee
- To provide staff with up to date information and training to ensure a well informed, motivated and trained

3. THE LEGAL FRAMEWORK FOR REPAIRS

There are a range of legislative and regulatory responsibilities which affect the repairs service. These include:

- a range of Health and Safety duties to ensure our tenants, staff and contractors are living or working in a safe environment
- various landlord responsibilities for repairs set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 & 2010
- contractual arrangements for repairs through leases or management and service level agreements with partner organisations
- the Scottish Housing Regulator will measure the performance of the repairs service through the standards set out in the Social Housing Charter. This includes ensuring that our properties meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standards (SHQS) by 2015.
- The Equality Act (2010), placing a duty on the Association to ensure that the service does not disadvantage any customer with a Protected Characteristic.

4. THE RESPONSE REPAIRS SERVICE

The staff in the response repairs team aim to provide the customer with a well defined, efficient, reliable and accountable service. The four main areas of the service are covered in this section of the policy, supported by Appendices to provide more detailed information.

4.1 Standards

The Response Repairs Team are tasked with a range of duties including the instructing, inspection and monitoring of repairs and servicing work as well as cost control and administration of the service. The team work to a set of standards which can be seen in Appendix 1.

4.2 Communication

Information about the repairs service is available to customers in a number of locations and formats including via:

- Tenant Handbook
- Information Leaflets
- Tenant newsletters
- Social Media
- Website
- Text service

Information to the tenant will include what repairs the tenant is responsible for and what are the Association's responsibility; Right to Repair; recharge costs; targets for each category of repair and performance in relation to these; how to report a repair; how to feedback on the service quality and how to get in touch with the team.

4.3 Access to service

The Association aims to provide a flexible service which can respond to the individual needs of a customer as far as is possible. This means contacting people by their preferred contact method, in their preferred language and at a time which suits them. As a minimum standard the Association will aim to offer customers an appointment on a specific day, and allotted to either a morning or afternoon.

4.4 Quality

The repairs service aims to use good quality materials are used, and that work is completed to a high standard. This will be achieved through a system of pre and post inspections, and a robust service level agreement with contractors. The inspection framework used by the team is found in Appendix 2. In addition, quality information is obtained through the customer feedback reports. The team will continue to develop other opportunities for the customer to be involved in the development and improvement of the repairs service with the assistance of the Support Services Team.

5. TARGET COMPLETION TIMES

The Association splits repairs into different categories according to the nature of the failure or fault. Each of the categories is clearly defined to allow staff to operate the system ensuring a consistent and fair service is delivered. The categories are described below.

5.1. Emergency Repairs – target for completion 6 hours

These repairs present circumstances which involve an immediate health and safety hazard, or which make the property uninhabitable. An example may be a fire or flood incident, or an interruption to mains services. Right to Repair items with a one day completion time are also in this category. These repairs are available 24 hours per day through the Association's Out-of-Hours repair service.

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5.2 Urgent Repairs – target completion 3 working days

Faults which require prompt attention, but are not an emergency are in this category. Examples include faulty electrics, leaking pipes, partial loss of water, communal door repairs. Right to Repair items with a 3 or 7 day target are also in this category

5.3 Routine Repairs – target completion 15 working days

All other items are categorised as routine repairs.

See Appendix 3 for a full list of the individual repairs, split into the categories.

Whilst the Association will work towards achieving these completion timescales, some works may require to be planned around the delivery of parts, availability of specialist contractors or other factors out with the Association's control. In these cases, the staff will keep the customer advised of the progress of the repair and the expected timescale for completion of the repair. The repairs team will regularly review target timescales as part of the Associations business plan process, and to stay in line with current good practice and regulatory requirements.

6. RIGHT TO REPAIR

The Association will ensure compliance with the Right to Repair scheme as required by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. In order to achieve this, the following is required:

- The Right to Repair is publicised regularly to the tenants, particularly through regular reminders via the tenant newsletter, website and use of social media, and the leaflets provided by the Scottish Government
- That the staff who are involved in the logging and processing of repairs are knowledgeable and able to deal correctly with repairs which qualify for the Right to Repair scheme. This includes advising the tenant of a qualifying repairs at the time the repair is reported to a team member
- That the Property Services Team have a pool of approved contractors to pass on to tenants who wish to exercise their Right to Repair
- That the housing database is used to record these repairs in order that information can be used for reporting purposes

7. RECHARGEABLE REPAIRS

The Association does not carry out repairs which are the responsibility of the tenant under the terms of the tenancy agreement. If a tenant wishes the Association to carry out one of these repairs it is payable in advance. A full list of repairs responsibility is found in Appendix 4.

The tenant is also recharged for any repairs which are required as a result of wilful damage, neglect or accidental actions by the tenant, their household or their visitors.

Full details on the Association's recharges are found in the Recharge Policy.

8. SERVICING

8.1 Gas Servicing

The Association will meet its statutory obligations in relation to gas safety management. This requires that a system is in place to ensure that all gas systems in Association's tenanted properties are serviced on an annual basis, and also that a safety check is completed at a change of tenancy.

In the process of ensuring this duty is carried out, the Association will ensure a clearly defined procedure is followed by the appointed contractor whereby the gas safety check is arranged with a tenant. Where access is not successful through cooperation with the tenant, the Association will take steps to gain entry using a master key in order to ensure that the property's gas system has a safety check in within the proper timescale.

The Association will appoint an independent Gas Safe Register approved contractor to carry out an annual sample of at least 7% of the services completed in order to quality check the principle contractor's work.

Reports of the gas safety information are made to the Tenant's Services Sub-Committee on a quarterly basis.

8.2 Other Servicing Arrangements

The Association will ensure that appropriate specialist contractors are appointed for servicing other items such as lifts, alternative heating systems, air conditioning and CCTV systems.

9. TENANT SATISFACTION AND INVOLVEMENT

The Association is committed to the provision of a quality repairs service and takes it's obligation to get repairs Right First Time seriously. A range of feedback mechanisms are used in order to find out about the customer experience of the repairs service. First, there is an opportunity for the customer to feedback on their experience of each repair as it is completed. There is further opportunity via the Tenant Satisfaction Survey, and at tenant events. The use of social media surveys adds other opportunities to hear tenant opinion on the service.

The complaints process is another opportunity to use feedback on repairs to improve the service, and the response repairs team will regularly adopt a 'lessons learned' approach to identifying any weaker areas requiring development.

In accordance with the Social Housing Charter, the Association will ensure that tenant opinion is sought in developing and shaping the repairs service.

10. PROCEDURES

Procedures and process maps to be followed by staff are held both in hard copy and electronic format. These include a range of up to date information for staff on the following areas:

- Repairs responsibilities
- Timescales for each type of repair
- Approved contractors
- Costs for repairs via a schedule of rates
- Planned maintenance activities for the coming year

11. STAFF RESOURCES AND TRAINING

The Policy is implemented by staff in Customer Services, particularly in the Property Services and the Your Call Teams.

Training includes:

- Regular ongoing training in the legal framework affecting response repairs, particularly the Right to Repair scheme
- Internal policy and good practice
- Dealing with damp and condensation in the home
- Customer Service Training

- Appropriate IT skills
- Interview skills
- Dealing with difficult situations
- Equality and Diversity Training

12. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The response repairs service is regularly monitored and reports are used in order to monitor day-to-day efficiencies as well as to fulfil wider reporting obligations.

Comprehensive repairs records also ensure that there is transparency in the way the repairs work is carried out and authorised by the team.

The Property Services Team will regularly report on:

- The number and percentage of repairs completed within the Association's target timescales
- Satisfaction with the repairs service
- Number of appointment made and the number kept
- Percentage of gas-served properties which have a current gas safety certificate

Reports are made on a monthly basis to the Director of Customer Services and to each cycle of the Tenants Services Sub-committee and the Committee of Management.

Right to Complain

In the event you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please contact the Association for a copy of our Complaints Policy, which can also be viewed on our website.

Equality and Diversity

The Association is committed to promoting equality and diversity across all areas of its work, and discrimination or harassment of any kind is not tolerated.

RESPONSE REPAIRS TEAM SERVICE STANDARDS

The standards for the response repairs team form part of the overall service standards in place for the Customer Services Department. These are in place in order to ensure that the service you receive from our team is consistently good across all team members.

When you need a repair, we will:

- Provide you with a range of simple and convenient ways to tell us about the repair
- Make sure you know when a repair is your responsibility
- Let you know if a repair will cost you money, and also how much it will cost you
- Provide you with an out-of-hours emergency repairs service and make sure you know who to contact and when you need to contact them
- Send you a confirmation of your repair, and tell you when it will happen and who will be carrying out the work
- Make sure we tell you the target completion date for the repair and whether it qualifies under the Right to Repair scheme
- Try our best to arrange the repair to happen at a convenient time for non-emergency repairs and to give you a morning or afternoon appointment slot
- Offer specific appointment times for repairs inspections
- Ensure that tradesmen working at your home carry an I.D. badge and treat you and your home with courtesy and respect
- Ensure that our tradesmen tidy up any mess they have created whilst carrying out a repair
- Provide you with an opportunity to offer us feedback on the repairs service
- Ensure that our repairs are completed to a satisfactory standard in order to avoid repeat repairs for the same item

In order to help us deliver these standards, we need you to:

- Keep your property in a reasonable state of cleanliness and good decorative order
- Report any faults in and around your home which need a repair as soon as possible
- Allow us access to your property to look at the repair and decide what needs to be done
- Make sure our tradesmen and contractors can get on to do the work
- Carry out the repairs for which you are responsible

RESPONSE REPAIRS AND THE ROLE OF INSPECTIONS

Overview

In order to achieve a consistency of service and value for money the Association has a range of duties which are undertaken by a property inspector. These include:

- Pre-inspections to ensure a consistent approach in the service
- Post-inspections to ensure quality standards are met
- Alteration inspections to ensure any changes made to properties are safe, acceptable and to our required standard
- Contractor liaison duties to ensure value for money and to maintain standards
- Reports analysis to monitor performance and ensure transparency

The Association also recognises that tenants have different needs and expectations. The inspector is available to visit a tenant in their home and to discuss what the repairs service can and cannot do to assist them.

1. Pre-inspection of a repair

Appendix 4 shows the type of repair which will require a pre-inspection. These are generally the more complex repairs scenarios, or those which require a more technical knowledge than can be provided by the tenant reporting the fault. In general this includes the following:

- A structural defect which has potential to cause harm or to deteriorate quickly
- Reports of damp and mould
- All jobs which have a potential cost of £300 or more
- Major plastering works
- Garden drainage issues or wall/fence replacements
- A defective appliance such as a bath or sink

The target for the number of pre-inspections required for repairs is a minimum of 5% up to a maximum of 10% of all response repairs work.

All pre-inspections have a target of 3 working days to complete from the day of contact with the customer. All pre-inspection work is by appointment in advance of the visit. The pre-inspection does not alter the overall timescale for the repair to be carried out.

2. Post-inspections of a repair

The repairs service is the area in which the customer places the most demand, and also tends to be the area which has the highest volume of complaints. For this

reason, the Association undertakes to regularly inspect repairs after they are completed in order to monitor the quality of the service.

Post-inspection also allows for an assessment of a contractor's work in order to ensure the Association is being invoiced appropriately and according to the terms of the contract.

The target for the number of post-inspections is based on a 10% sample of all completed repairs. This sample can be random, but may also be targeted to certain repairs categories should there be a need to resolve a specific issue. Post inspections are arranged in advance by appointment with the customer.

In addition, all repairs which meet one of the following criteria will be post inspected:

- A repair which has resulted in a stage 2 complaint
- A repair with a cost/order variance of more than £500
- Repairs subject to an insurance claim

Post inspection outcomes are recorded on the housing database in order to allow for internal management reporting and for feedback to contractors and customers.

3. Alteration Requests

The Association has a process whereby the tenant can request permission to make alterations and improvements to their property. This is acceptable under the terms of the Scottish Secure Tenancy Agreement. It is necessary that an inspection of alterations is undertaken in the following cases:

- There are structural changes to the property
- There is to be fencing put up at the boundary of the property
- Loft renovations
- External windows or doors are to be installed
- Bathrooms, showers or kitchens are to be fitted
- Installation of gas or electric fireplace

There is no specific requirement to inspect the following alteration work:

- Installation of a satellite dish where there is no communal facility
- Fitting additional base or kitchen units
- Installation of shelving within a cupboard space
- Replacing a garden gate
- Replacing door handles with tenant's own choice
- Minor garden layout changes

LANSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION – REPAIR TIMESCALES				
Repair Description	Emergency Repair (6 hours)	Urgent Repairs (3 days)	Routine Repair (15 days)	Exceptions
PLUMBING				
Dripping taps			▲	
Leaking tap when used		▲		
Blocked sink or basin		▲		
Loose taps		▲		
Replacement taps		▲		
Blocked WC	▲			▲ Chargeable repair
Blocked WC due to tenant negligence	▲			▲ Chargeable repair
Leaking WC	▲			
Replace flush handles	▲			
Toilet difficult to flush	▲			
Ball valve to tank		▲		
Leaking overflow		▲		6 hours if excessive
Broken toilet seat		▲		General needs tenants responsibility
Joinery				
Gain access for tenant due to faulty lock	▲			
Gain access due to lost keys by tenant	▲			Chargeable repair
Renew faulty door lock if only means of security	▲			
Renew faulty door lock if two forms of security on door		▲		
Insecure door	▲			
Renew internal door			▲	
Replace door handles		▲		
Architrave and frames			▲	
Loose floorboards		▲		
Corridor lights out		▲		
Security lights		▲		
Faulty shower with bath		▲		
Faulty shower no bath		▲		
Replacement trunking			▲	
Smoke alarms		▲		6 hours if communal area

LANSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION – REPAIR TIMESCALES

Repair Description	Emergency Repair (6 hours)	Urgent Repairs (3 days)	Routine Repair (15 days)	Exceptions
COMMUNAL AREAS				
Lift not working	▲			
Communal light out			▲	
All communal lights out		▲		
Emergency lighting		▲		
Security lights		▲		
Door entry system		▲		
Loose handrail		▲		
No TV reception		▲		
Rotary driers			▲	General needs tenants responsibility
Uneven path dangerous		▲		
Uneven path not dangerous			▲	
HEATING				
Total failure during winter	▲			
Total failure during summer	▲			
Partial failure		▲		
Radiator leaking		▲		
Storage heater replacement		▲		
WINDOWS				
Broken glass	▲			
Cracked glass		▲		
Loose window		▲		
Window will not close		▲		▲ 6 hours if ground level
Faulty handle		▲		
Leaking window		▲		
Loose window sill			▲	
Broken vent			▲	
ROOFS				
Moss removal			▲	
Roof felt replacement			▲	
Loose tiles		▲		▲ 6 hours immediate danger

LANSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION – REPAIR TIMESCALES

Repair Description	Emergency Repair (6 hours)	Urgent Repairs (3 days)	Routine Repair (15 days)	Exceptions
Make safe after storm	▲			
Rain penetration		▲		
Major roof repair			▲	▲4 days if unsafe
Replace broken slates			▲	▲4 days if unsafe
Re-bed ridge tiles			▲	4 days if unsafe
Flashings			▲	
WATER				
No hot water		▲		
No cold water at all	▲			
No water to single tap		▲		
Faulty stop tap		▲		▲6 hours if it will not turn off
EXTERNAL				
Damaged fencing			▲	▲4 days if dangerous
Renew fencing			▲	
Damaged gate			▲	
Loose paving not dangerous			▲	▲6 hours if in main walkway
Trip hazards		▲		▲6 hours if in main walkway
Renew flag stones			▲	
Pointing			▲	
Guttering repairs			▲	

LANGSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION – REPAIRS PROCEDURES – WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT?			
Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
COMMUNAL AREAS	▲		
Lifts and stairs	▲		
Redecoration		▲	
Tenants own decorations		▲	
Communal facilities			
ROOF			
Chimneys and stacks	▲		
Roof structure and covering	▲		
Guttering, rainwater pipes	▲		
Fascias, soffits barge board	▲		
WALLS AND CANOPIES			
External walls and render	▲		
Foundations	▲		
Concrete canopies	▲		
Door canopies	▲		
Coping stones	▲		
Tenants own garden features		▲	
WINDOWS AND DOORS			
Window frames and sills	▲		
Glazing	▲		
Glazing when caused by criminal damage and reported to the Police		▲	
Glazing when damaged by tenant/visitor		▲	
Window ironmongery	▲		
Door entry systems	▲		
Door frames	▲		
External doors	▲		
Threshold strips	▲		
Door locks and ironmongery	▲		
Damaged locks by tenants	▲		▲ Tenant responsibility if intentional damage
Additional keys		▲	
Gaining entry (lost keys)		▲	
Letter plates	▲		
PIPES AND DRAINS			
Soil and vent pipes	▲		

**LANGSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION –
REPAIRS PROCEDURES – WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT?**

Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
Drains and gully surrounds	▲		
Gully grids	▲		
Manhole covers	▲		
Blocked drains	▲		Rechargeabe if due to negligence
Underground bursts	▲		
GARDENS AND BOUNDARIES			
Individual garden maintenance		▲	
Communal gardens maintenance	▲		
Dividing walls or fence (if owned by Langstane)	▲		
External fencing owned by Langstane	▲		
External fencing installed by tenant		▲	
Gates if owned by Langstane	▲		
Paths, steps and other means of access	▲		
Rotary lines		▲	
Concrete line posts	▲		
INSIDE YOUR HOME			
WINDOWS			
Internal sills, UPVC or timber	▲		
Skirting boards	▲		
Window vents	▲		
INTERNAL DOORS			
Door handles and latch	▲		▲ Tenant responsibility if own installed
Easing and adjusting	▲		
WALLS			
Internal Walls	▲		
Major plaster repairs	▲		
Minor plaster repairs	▲		
Hairline cracks in plaster		▲	
Wall tiles	▲		
FLOORS			
Concrete floors	▲		
Vinyl floor tiles if supplied by Association	▲		

**LANGSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION –
REPAIRS PROCEDURES – WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT?**

Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
Loose floor covering		▲	
Floor boards and joists	▲		
Carpets and laminates		▲	
Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
Door strips		▲	
CEILINGS			
Repairs and renewals	▲		
Hairline cracks		▲	
Patch repairs	▲		
Artex ceilings, patch repairs	▲		▲ Tenant responsible if installed privately
Artex full ceiling		▲	
FIREPLACES			
Fire surrounds	▲		
Replacement fires due to fault	▲		
Tenants choice fireplace		▲	
STAIRCASE			
Stairs	▲		
Bannister and handrails	▲		
Gloss painting		▲	
BATHROOM			
Bathroom suite	▲		
Bath panels	▲		
Airing cupboard shelves		▲	
Internal pipe boxing		▲	
Toilet roll holders		▲	
Shower curtains		▲	
KITCHEN			
Kitchen cupboards and units	▲		▲ Tenant responsibility if due to negligence
Drawers and doors	▲		
Handles and plinths	▲		
Catches and hinges	▲		
Worktops	▲		
ELECTRICAL ITEMS			
Electrical wiring and trunking	▲		

**LANGSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION –
REPAIRS PROCEDURES – WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT?**

Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
Hard wired smoke alarms	▲		
Plugs to appliances		▲	
TV aerial sockets	▲		
TV aerials	▲		
Sockets and switches	▲		
Consumer units	▲		
Storage heaters	▲		
Electric fires	▲		
Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
Electric meter and supply	▲		▲ Tenants responsible for supplier
Immersion heaters	▲		
Cookers if owned by Langstane	▲		
Disconnection and reconnection of cookers		▲	
Extractor fans	▲		
Door bells hard wired	▲		▲ Please note we will replace your hard wired bell with a battery operated one
Battery door bells		▲	
Reset trip switches		▲	▲ Recharge if contractor called out
PLUMBING			
Water service pipes, overflows and tanks	▲		
Blocked sinks, baths and basins	▲		▲ Rechargeable repair
Taps, stop taps and wheel valves	▲		
Blocked toilets, first time only	▲		▲ Rechargeable repair if problems persist
Blocked toilet due to tenant neglect		▲	▲ Rechargeable repair
Sink units	▲		
Toilet flushing mechanism	▲		
Toilet seats		▲	
Shower trays	▲		
Blocked level access shower	▲		
Plugs and chains		▲	
Showers if owned by Langstane	▲		
Tenants own shower		▲	
Silicone sealant	▲		
Bleeding of radiators	▲		

**LANGSTANE HOUSING ASSOCIATION –
REPAIRS PROCEDURES – WHOSE RESPONSIBILITY IS IT?**

Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
Shower heads and hoses	▲		
HOME ENERGY EFFICIENCY			
Draught proofing to windows and doors	▲		
Hot water cylinder jackets	▲		
Loft insulation	▲		
Cavity wall insulation	▲		
Energy efficient light bulbs		▲	
LIGHTING			
Light bulbs		▲	
Florescent light bulbs	▲		
Security lighting	▲		
Repair Description	Association	Tenant	Exceptions
Tenants own security light		▲	
Light pendants & fittings	▲		
REDECORATION			
Internal redecoration		▲	
External redecoration (6 year programme)	▲		
Glossing and staining		▲	
Redecoration after fire damage	▲		▲ If works to be completed through insurance

▲ **Pest Control** – this is the responsibility of your local Environmental Health Department and you may be charged for this service. Langstane will only deal with pest control in communal areas.

▲ **Tenant’s responsibility exceptions: vulnerability**

Where a tenant indicates that they will have difficulty in carrying out tenant responsibility repair works themselves because of a disability or a physical or mental health impairment, Langstane will undertake the repair. This will be done only in exceptional circumstances and where the tenant has no other relatives who could reasonably be expected to undertake the work.