

## PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

## Housing and Health Committee

27 January 2016

## Responsive Repairs Policy – Review and Update

## Report by Director (Housing and Community Care)

**PURPOSE OF REPORT**

The purpose of the report is to seek approval for the revised Responsive Repairs Policy.

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 The importance of keeping the Council's 7,415 houses well maintained and in a good state of repair is a key priority for the Housing Service. The housing repairs and improvement teams undertake and manage this work ensuring that tenants are provided with safe, warm, modernised, secure housing that meets the Scottish Housing Quality Standard. This supports our tenants and residents to remain in their homes longer, contributing to sustainable tenancies and communities.
- 1.2 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 set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and 2010
  - Contractual arrangements for repairs through procurement or service level agreements with partner organisations
  - Measurement of performance by the Scottish Housing Regulator through the standards set out in the Social Housing Charter
  - Gas Safety Standards and Regulations
- 1.3 The Responsive Repairs Policy aims to ensure the Council as a landlord meets its legislative obligations and reflects current good practice guidance and outcomes set by the Scottish Housing Regulator.
- 1.4 The revised policy has been updated to accurately reflect operational arrangements and the new regulatory framework established by the Scottish Social Housing Charter. It also aims to be more customer-friendly and sets out clearly our responsibilities as a landlord and the responsibilities placed on our tenants in respect of repairs.
- 1.5 The revised policy includes a new section called 'A Right to a Repairs Service'. This section recognises the pressure placed on the Housing repairs

Service and the responsibilities of our tenants. It details when we may limit access to the repairs service as follows:

- If a customer presents a risk of violence or abusive behaviour towards staff or representatives
- When a customer has rent arrears

- 1.6 It is recognised that there has been an increase in rent arrears outstanding to the Council. The Housing Repairs Service is funded by the Housing Revenue Account and we need to make clear to our customers the impact of rent arrears on service delivery.
- 1.7 The approved Policy will be easily accessible to all our tenants and available on the Council's website. A user friendly, summary version of the policy will also be produced and included in our lettings packs for all new tenants.
- 1.8 Our Service User Review and Evaluation (SURE) team recently conducted an evaluation on our communication around our repairs service delivery. Their recommendations will influence future improvements within the service and where required updated within the policy when it is next revised.

## **2. PROPOSALS**

- 2.1 The report seeks approval from Committee for the following amendment to the Responsive Repairs Policy:-

A 'Right to a Repairs Service' to be included in the policy. This section details when a full repairs service will not be available to tenants.

## **3. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 This report provides an updated housing responsive repairs policy for Committee approval.
- 3.2 Housing and Health Committee is asked to approve the amendments to the Responsive Repairs Policy attached in the appendix.

### **Author**

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|---------------|---------------------------|--|
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### **Approved**

| <b>Name</b>  | <b>Designation</b>                    | <b>Date</b>     |
|--------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| John Gilruth | Director (Housing and Community Care) | 18 January 2016 |

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## 1. IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

|   |             |
|---|-------------|
| <b>Strategic Implications</b>                       |             |
| Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement           | <b>Yes</b>  |
| Corporate Plan                                      | <b>Yes</b>  |
| <b>Resource Implications</b>                        |             |
| Financial   | <b>None</b> |
| Workforce   | <b>None</b> |
| Asset Management (land, property, IST)              | <b>None</b> |
| <b>Assessments</b>                                  |             |
| Equality Impact Assessment                          | <b>Yes</b>  |
| Strategic Environmental Assessment                  | <b>None</b> |
| Sustainability (community, economic, environmental) | <b>Yes</b>  |
| Legal and Governance                                | <b>Yes</b>  |
| Risk  | <b>None</b> |
| <b>Consultation</b>                                 |             |
| Internal  | <b>Yes</b>  |
| External  | <b>Yes</b>  |
| <b>Communication</b>                                |             |
| Communications Plan                                 | <b>None</b> |

### 1. Strategic Implications

#### Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement

- 1.1 The Perth and Kinross Community Plan/Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2023 and Perth and Kinross Council Corporate plan 2013-18 have five concurrent outcomes which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. The following are relevant to this report:

- Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy.
- Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives.
- Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

#### Corporate Plan

- 1.2 Proposals contained in this report address the following Corporate Plan Priorities:

- Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives; and
- Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations.

## 2. Resource Implications

### Financial

- 2.1 There are no direct financial implications regarding this report.

### Workforce

- 2.2 There are no direct workforce implications regarding this report.

### Asset Management (land, property, IT)

- 2.3 There are no asset management implications regarding this report.

## 3. Assessments

### Equality Impact Assessment

- 3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council is required to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between equality groups. Carrying out Equality Impact Assessments for plans and policies allows the Council to demonstrate that it is meeting these duties.
- 3.2 The proposals have been considered under the Corporate Equalities Impact Assessment process (EqIA) with the following outcome:
- (i) Assessed as **relevant** for the purposes of EqIA;
  - (ii) Equalities monitoring of private owners engaging with the Council on common repairs is required as part of the performance monitoring of the new policy;
  - (iii) The policy requires the Council to assist owners from across all equality groups to access financial advice and assistance to fund their contribution to the cost of common repairs.

### Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 3.3 The Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 places a duty on the Council to identify and assess the environmental consequences of its proposals. However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matter presented in this report. The matters presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

### Sustainability

- 3.4 These proposals meet the following sustainability criteria;
- Where possible, using materials from sustainable sources.
  - Energy conservation through improved insulation measures.

- More efficient heating systems.
- More efficient lighting systems.

### Legal and Governance

- 3.5 Legal Services has been consulted and there are no direct legal implications with this report.

### Risk

- 3.6 The Housing and Community Care Senior Management Team regularly review performance frameworks that highlight overall performance and improvement actions and risks.

## **4. Consultation**

### Internal

- 4.1 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted on this report.

### External

- 4.2 The Tenants Participation Forum have been consulted on the Policy. A Short Life Working Group first met on 10 December to consider tenants opinions. They considered the Policy to be customer friendly and agreed with the new sections added.
- 4.3 The Tenant Committee Report Panel were consulted on this strategy. They considered the policy to be well designed and presented.

## **5. Communication**

- 5.1 There are no direct communication issues with regard to this report.

## **2. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

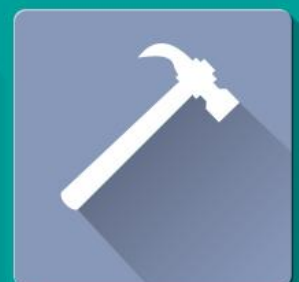
No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

## **3. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: The Responsive Repairs Policy.



# Responsive Repairs Policy





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Welcome to the Housing Repairs Service (HRS), Perth & Kinross Council's Repair and Maintenance Service.

We carry out around 29,000 repairs, alterations and safety checks on Council homes every year. Because we carry out so many jobs and each one matters to us, it's important that you know the type of repairs we're responsible for and the repairs that you, our tenants, are responsible for. This information is included in our Repairs Policy.

It also includes a useful section on how to fix minor faults, our complaints process and useful contacts.

There are also some repairs in communal and external areas that the Council is jointly responsible for if there are other owners in the communal areas. Before we can carry out any repair work, we need to get the agreement of the other owners. This can sometimes lead to a delay in repair work being carried out. This includes repairs to stair windows, roof repairs, fences and paths.

This Repairs Policy doesn't cover repairs carried out as part of our planned maintenance and modernisation programme. To find out more about this programme please ask our Improvements Section.

The main aim of the 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.

We aim to get the repairs done right first time and provide a good value, reliable and customer-centred Service.

## Contact the Repairs Centre

Tel **01738 476000**

Email **housingrepairs@pkc.gov.uk**

Write to us at:

***The Housing Repairs Service,  
Perth & Kinross Council,  
Pullar House,  
Kinnoull Street,  
PERTH PH2 5GD***





In addition, we understand the negative impact that poorly maintained properties can have on individual households and communities and aim 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.

Perth & Kinross Council will at all times make sure that its policy and practices meet the obligations within legislation, and also reflect current good practice guidance and the outcomes set by the Scottish Housing Regulator:

#### **Charter Outcome 4: Quality of Housing**

*Tenants' homes, as a minimum, meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard (SHQS) by April 2015 and continue to meet it thereafter, and when they are allocated, are always clean, tidy and in a good state of repair.*

#### **Charter Outcome 5: Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements**

*Tenants' homes are well maintained, with repairs and improvements carried out when required, and tenants are given reasonable choices about when work is done.*

*As your landlord we report annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator on how we are performing. Further details are on Page 27.*





**As your landlord, the Council is responsible for repairing and maintaining the structure of the property that you live in. This includes:**

- walls, floors and ceilings;
- window frames and external doors;
- roofs, drain pipes and gutters/rhones;
- kitchen and bathroom main fixtures (toilets, baths, basins, sinks, gas and water pipes);
- heating equipment (fires, radiators, storage heaters and panel heaters);
- water heating equipment (boilers and immersion heaters);
- electrical fittings (light switches, light fittings, sockets, wiring and mains operated smoke detectors);
- Maintenance of paths, fences, gates, driveways and any garden structure put in place by the Council. (Responsibility may be jointly shared among owners for fences, gates and driveways in communal areas);
- communal areas around the property (stairs, lifts, landings, some lighting, entrance halls and paving). This may also be a joint responsibility if other owners are involved (see section on communal/block repairs in Common Repairs on page 21;
- carrying out annual gas servicing and other safety checks.

**We may also complete the following work if you agree to pay for it in advance:**

- Repairing any damage caused by you, your family or visitors.
- Replacing lost keys.
- Helping you gain access if you've lost your keys or you're locked out.





By law the Council is responsible for carrying out annual gas servicing and safety checks in every home with gas. Legally you must give us access to your home so we can carry these out.

**Faulty appliances can give off carbon monoxide fumes, which are highly poisonous. Carbon monoxide has no colour, taste or smell, and can kill. Annual gas safety checks mean we can make sure your appliances are in safe working order. Every year we will send a letter advising you when your next gas service is due. If the date is unsuitable, please contact us to arrange an alternative appointment.**

If we've been unable to get into your home after two appointments and you've not been in touch, we will begin proceedings to cap your gas meter. This will include gaining entry to your home.

**If we have to force entry to carry out the gas service or cap your meter you will have to pay the costs for this.**

If you would like to install a new gas heater or boiler or replace an existing one, you must get written permission from us first. Any new appliance must be installed by a properly qualified, registered gas installer.

The new gas heater or boiler will then become the property of the Council, and we will maintain and service it for you. If you want to take the appliance with you when you end your tenancy you must get written permission from us first. This would include agreement on a suitable and properly fitted replacement being left in the property and subsequent inspection.

**If you smell gas, turn off the gas supply immediately. Open all the windows in the property and phone Scottish Gas Networks on 0800 111 999.**



# Your Responsibility as a Tenant



## As a tenant, you're responsible for minor repairs such as:

- fittings that you installed or accepted at the start of your tenancy, such as shelves, built-in wardrobes and laminate flooring;
- fitting additional locks;
- resetting tripped switches, fuses and light bulbs (not communal stair lighting);
- attempting to clear plumbing blockages;
- repairing minor cracks and holes in walls and ceilings that can be reasonably filled before decorating;
- television aerials and reception equipment (unless installed by the Council);
- all internal decoration;
- maintenance of paths, fences, gates, driveways and any garden structure not put in place by the Council. (Responsibility may be jointly shared among owners for fences, gates and driveways in communal areas);
- rechargeable repairs detailed in the Rechargeable Repairs Policy, unless an exemption is applied.

Our Repairs Centre Staff (phone **01738 476000** and choose **option1**) can offer help and advice on getting this work done if you're having problems.

## As a tenant you should also:

- report criminal damage or vandalism to the police and get an incident number;
- take action to prevent further damage once a fault has been identified;
- take action to avoid condensation by ventilating your home, not blocking air vents and opening windows;
- get written permission before making alterations to your home;
- allow us access to your home to carry out safety checks required by law;
- repair any damage that you, your family or any visitors have caused, other than through fair wear and tear. If the repairs service puts right this damage you will be responsible for paying a recharge cost in advance. The repair must be carried out by a competent person and to an acceptable standard. Any gas or electrical work must be completed by a qualified tradesman.

## If the Council is responsible for the repair you can request this by:

- phoning the Repairs Centre on **01738 476000** and choose **option 1**;
- emailing **housingrepairs@pkc.gov.uk**
- using the freephone service at your local Area Office;
- if you live in a multi-storey block you can speak to the Caretaker to arrange repairs;
- if you're in sheltered housing accommodation, your warden can help you arrange repairs.



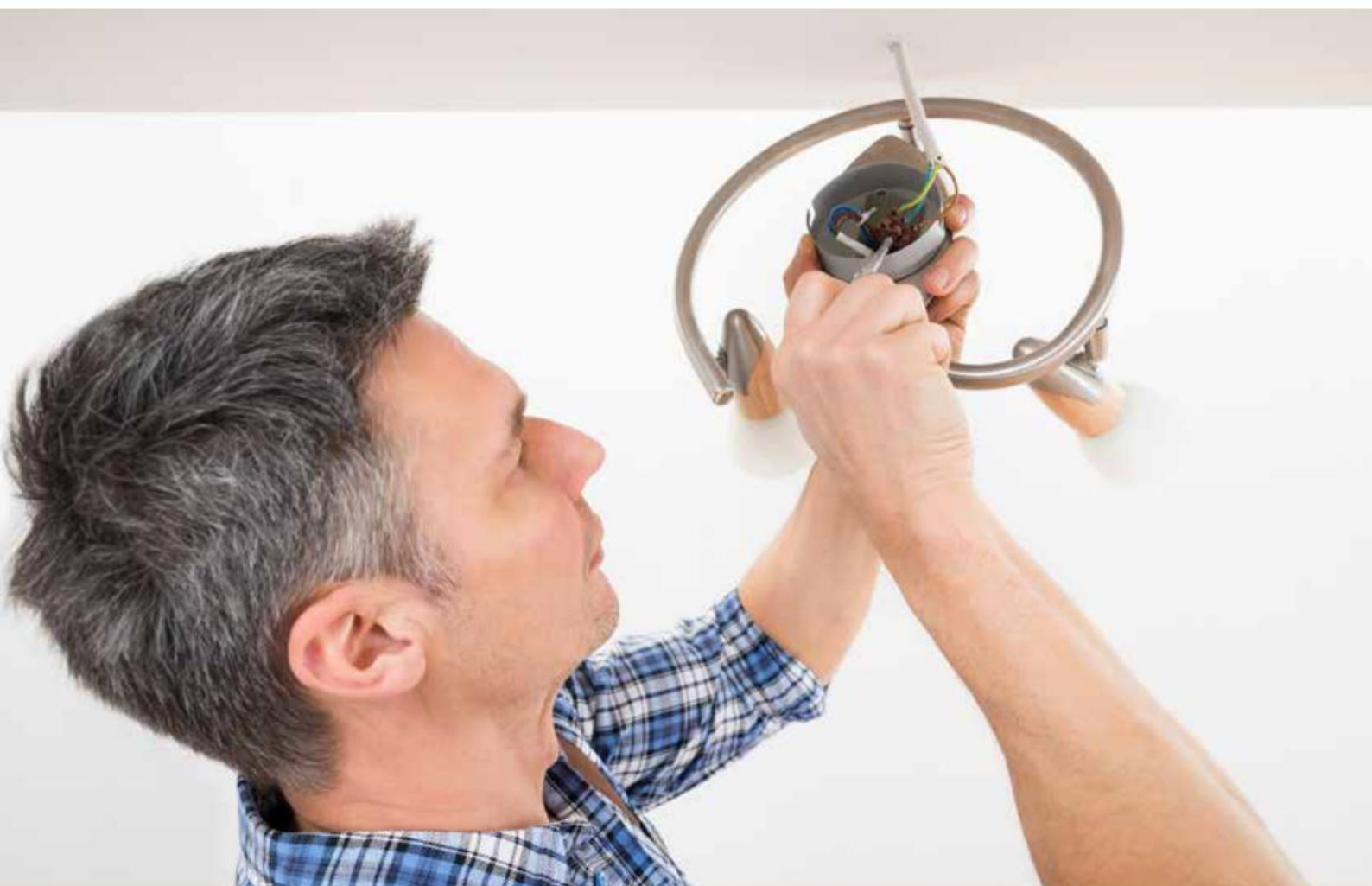
### **When requesting an appointment please make sure:**

- *you arrange the appointment at a time when you will be at home;*
- *you always give a contact number in case we need to reschedule the work;*
- *you let us know of anything that may stop us gaining access to the property or your ability to clear the area around the fault.*

Once you've arranged an appointment date, there are a number of things you should do to make sure we can carry out our job as quickly, effectively and safely as possible.

### **Before we arrive to carry out the work it is your responsibility to:**

- *make sure there is a responsible adult present to allow our staff access to the repair. If a responsible adult over 16 is not in when we call we will have to cancel the appointment;*
- *clear the area around the repair before our staff arrive to carry out the work. This may include lifting carpets, laminate flooring, clearing work surfaces, emptying cupboards, taking down curtains or moving furniture away from the area;*
- *for health and safety reasons, keep pets and young children away from the area of the repair work whilst we carry out the repair;*
- *refrain from smoking in the area whilst our staff or trades operatives are in the property.*



# What if I am a New Tenant



When you move into your new home, we will have carried out all repairs according to void lettable standard.

At the start of your tenancy, the Housing Officer will show you where your electricity fuse box, water stopcock, and gas stopcock (if the property has gas) are, and explain how to turn these off in an emergency. You will also be given general advice on how to prevent and fix some minor faults. Find out more in the Common Faults section of this booklet on page 22.

At the start of your tenancy, the following items below will be supplied. After this, it is your responsibility to replace them:

- *Internal door handles, hinges and catches (except fire exit doors and kitchen doors);*
- *Drawer handles;*
- *External door numbers and letter plates (not fitted by the Council);*
- *Plugs and chains for baths and basins;*
- *Draught excluders (where appropriate).*

You need to decide what supplier you want to have your energy bills with and create an account in your name before we can uncap and service the gas boiler to your home. Please note that if you have a heating charge included with your rent, you can't change your supplier.





## The Right to Repair

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced the Right to Repair scheme. This gives tenants the right to have small emergency or urgent repairs done quickly and to be paid compensation if we don't meet the legal timescales.

To qualify for the Right to Repair scheme, the repair must:

- *have an estimated value of £350 or less;*
- *be a 'qualifying repair' (Qualifying repairs are listed in the table on page 11).*

## Requesting a Repair

When you phone the Repairs Centre, we will let you know if the repair is a qualifying repair and how long we have to fix the fault.

We will record in the system that this is a qualifying repair and use this information for reporting purposes and also monitoring compensation payments.

## Timescales for Completion

**Many qualifying repairs have a one working day completion time. For example, if a repair is requested on a Tuesday, we have until 5.00 pm on Wednesday to complete the repair. If a repair is reported on a Friday, we normally have until 5.00 pm on Monday to complete the work.**

These are the timescales set out in the Right to Repair legislation and establish your right to any compensation. Our internal targets mean we will usually complete the repair more quickly than this.

## Exceptional Circumstances

Sometimes there may be circumstances beyond our control which will make it impossible to carry out the repair within the maximum time allowed. This could include severe weather or the availability of parts from manufacturer.

In these circumstances we may need to make temporary arrangements and extend the maximum time to complete the repair. We will let you know if we need to do this.

If boiler parts are unavailable, temporary heating can be provided. You will then be offered an appointment as soon as the parts become available.





| Fault   | Timescale (full working days) |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Blocked flue due to an open fire or boiler.   | 1                             |
| Blocked, Leaking or foul drains, soil stacks or toilet pans.  | 1                             |
| Blocked sink, wash hand basin.  | 1                             |
| Loss of electric power.   | 1                             |
| Partial loss of electric power.   | 3                             |
| External window, door or lock not secure.   | 1                             |
| Significant leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes, tanks or cisterns and cannot be contained. | 1                             |
| Loss or partial loss of gas supply.   | 1                             |
| Loss or partial loss of hot water and/or heating and no alternative heating is available.             | 1                             |
| Toilet flushing and there is no other toilet in the house.  | 1                             |
| Unsafe power, lighting socket or electrical fitting.  | 1                             |
| Loss of water supply.   | 1                             |
| Partial loss of water supply.   | 3                             |
| Loose or detached banister or hand rail.  | 3                             |
| Unsafe timber flooring or stair treads.   | 3                             |
| Mechanical extractor fan in kitchen or bathroom not working and no alternative ventilation.           | 7                             |

## Compensation

If we don't attend and make safe a qualifying repair within the time allowed, you're entitled to £15 compensation. You're also entitled to a further £3 each day until the repair is completed. The maximum compensation that can be paid is £100.

## Alternative Contractors

If we fail to carry out the repair within the timescale set out in the legislation, you're entitled to contact an approved alternative contractor and ask them to carry out the repair. You will be given the names and contact details of an alternative contractor/s when you first report the repair. If you contact an alternative contractor you are still entitled to compensation.

## The Right to Repair does not apply if:

- the date for repair was extended because you asked for an alternative appointment;
- the cost of the repair exceeds £350;
- we have been unable to gain access for an inspection or for the repair to be carried out. If this happens you will need to make a new repair request and the Right to Repair process will start again.



## The Council may limit your access to Services if:

- *you or your family present a current risk of violent or abusive behaviour towards Council staff or representatives;*
- *you are in rent arrears - this will include access to the Improvements service;*
- *you have concluded missives within the Right to Buy process;*
- *your home is scheduled for demolition. If your home is subject to demolition, you will receive information which outlines what repairs can be carried out. Under normal circumstances tenants will receive the full Repairs Service and only when demolition is imminent will there be the possibility of a more limited Repairs Service;*
- *in some circumstances where a fault is reported that requires replacement rather than repair it will be dealt with as part of a planned maintenance programme;*
- *you have the right to appeal against any decision to limit repairs by writing to:*  
*The Housing Repairs Service,*  
*Pullar House,*  
*Kinnoull Street,*  
*PERTH*  
*PH2 5GD*  
  
*Tel 01738 476000 and select Option 1*  
*Email [housingrepairs@pkc.gov.uk](mailto:housingrepairs@pkc.gov.uk)*

Any restrictions or limited access would not affect your statutory right of repair within your home ie Right to Repair or where there is a health and safety risk to either the household or residents.

## Our policy on violence/abuse to employees at work

Our staff have the right to work without fear of violence or abuse. Anyone threatening or abusing our staff will be reported to the police and we will press for prosecution. If such an incident occurs on any occasion, your access to the Council's Repairs Service will be restricted and your tenancy may be put at risk.

## Rent Arrears

If you are currently in rent arrears and you have failed to keep to your payment agreement or a payment plan has not been made to repay the outstanding balance, the Council will restrict any repairs to your property unless they are of an emergency nature.

## Will I have to pay for any Repairs?

You're responsible for any damage that you, your family or visitors have caused. If we carry out a repair for such damage you'll be asked to pay for it in advance. We will give you an estimate for the repair. If you can't afford to pay it all at once, alternative arrangements can be made.

When you give up the tenancy we will inspect the property and its state of repair. If any repair work that you have carried out has not been completed to the required standard, then remedial work will be carried out by the Council. You will have to pay the full cost of the repair. If you don't leave a forwarding address, the Council will initiate its usual debt recovery process.

You can make your own arrangements for repairs to be carried out, provided the work is completed to an adequate standard and permission has been given by the local Area Team. Any gas or electrical work must be completed by a qualified tradesperson for that specific repair. After the work is completed a Property Inspector will need to visit your home to agree the standard of workmanship.

A record of the repairs and the outstanding bill will be kept and taken into account should you approach the Council for housing in the future. If you feel that you're not responsible for the cost of the repair you can appeal by contacting your Area Office. If the appeal is not settled it will be directed to the Housing Repairs Service Manager. Contact details are available on page 21.

# Different Types of Repairs and Their Response Times



There are 4 different categories of day to day repairs - **emergency, urgent, appointment** and **long term repairs** - each one is described here.

## Emergency Repairs

An emergency repair is classed as one where there is threat to health and safety or where we need to take quick action to prevent damage to your home or neighbouring property.

Some examples are:

*Burst water or heating pipe*

*No heating or hot water*

*No electricity*

*Carbon monoxide alarm sounding*

Emergency repairs will be attended to and made safe within 24 hours of being reported and, where possible, we will carry out the full repair. If this is not possible, we will carry out temporary repairs immediately to make the situation safe, and then return to complete the repair.

Emergencies during working hours should be reported by phoning:

The Repairs Centre on **01738 476000** and select **Option 1**

## Emergency repairs out with normal working hours (out-of-hours emergencies)

Some Emergency Repairs are available to all tenants 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

**If a serious fault occurs outside normal working hours, and it isn't safe to wait until the next working day, you should report it to the out-of-hours emergency Repairs Service by calling 01738 476000 and selecting Option 4.**

The out-of-hour's emergency Service is available on:

**Weekdays** Monday to Thursday  
6.00 pm to 8.00 am

**Weekends** Friday 6.00 pm to Monday 8.00 am

Emergency repairs will be attended to out-with normal working hours only when:

- *there is a serious risk to health and safety;*
- *there is a serious risk to the structure of the property;*
- *the property is not secure.*

Examples are:

### Electrical

- *Total or significant partial loss of electrical power (eg lighting circuit, no sockets).*
- *Unsafe power of light socket/electrical fitting.*
- *CO detector activated after Transco attending.*

### Gas

- *Fires and explosions.*
- *Gas leaks/escapes.*
- *No heating or hot water (without any other means of heating).*
- *Soot identified at gas appliance.*
- *Carbon Monoxide detector activated .*
- *Appliance (including fire) which cannot be switched off.*
- *Central heating system overheating.*

### Water and drainage

- *Blocked or leaking external drains, soil stacks, or toilet pans.*
- *Blocked sinks, basins or baths (where no access to other washing facilities).*
- *Leaks or flooding from water or heating pipes.*
- *Toilet not flushing, (where there is only one toilet within the property or where the tenant is vulnerable or elderly - advice will be given for all others).*
- *Loss of water supply reported or inspected.*
- *Loss of washing facilities eg shower (where tenant is vulnerable or elderly).*



### Other

- *Tenant locked out (rechargeable to tenant).*
- *Requirement to board-up windows or secure entry doors.*
- *Loose slates or masonry likely to fall from height.*
- *Roof leaks.*
- *Delivery of temporary heating.*

If the repair doesn't qualify as an out of hours emergency we will let you know.

If a responsible adult is not present at the property when the operative responds, the job will have to be cancelled.

We will let you know when you report an emergency repair when we will respond, normally up to six hours from the time of reporting. In some cases, such as severe weather conditions, where there may be a high demand for repair work, some delays to the service may be expected.

The work will be to make the situation safe and/or carry out a temporary repair.

If further work is needed, arrangements for a follow-on appointment will be made.

### Recharges for Emergency Repairs

Where an emergency repair has been caused by neglect or recklessness, then costs of all work (including call-out costs) will be recharged to the tenant. Similarly, if the emergency work is later found to be the tenant's responsibility then a recharge will be made (see 'Will I Have to Pay for Any Repairs' section for further details).

Where a tradesperson attends to an emergency repair and no access is given by the tenant the cost of a 'No Access' will be recharged to the tenant.

## Urgent Repairs

These are repairs that are not emergencies, but need to be carried out quickly to prevent more damage to your home. These repairs will be carried out within 5 working days of being reported. Some examples are:

*Minor leaks and overflow*

*Damaged flooring and tiles*

*Minor faults to showers where other washing facilities are available*

## Appointments

These are every day repairs that are needed as a result of normal wear and tear of the property. These repairs will be carried out through a mutually agreed appointment. Some examples are:

*Faulty radiators.*

*Faulty electrical switch or light pendant.*

If you are unable to keep an appointment, please let us know and we will be happy to arrange another date to suit you. If you do not notify us that you are unable to keep an appointment and we attend to carry out the repair and do not get access to your home, the repair request will normally be cancelled.

Below are the different appointments and times available:

### **Morning Appointments**

*We will arrive between 8.00 am and 12.30 pm  
Monday to Thursday*

### **Afternoon Appointments**

*We will arrive between 12 noon and 4.30 pm  
Monday to Thursday*

### **Friday Appointments**

*We will arrive between 8.00 am and 1.00 pm*

We will make every effort to keep all appointments, however, if there is any delay that we are aware of, we will call you in advance.



## Factors affecting repair timescales

The repair timescales may vary in severe weather conditions. In these circumstances, we will let you know when you report repairs that severe weather delays are occurring and indicate when a repair will be completed.

If a repair requires parts or materials that must be ordered, the repair may not be completed within the usual timescale. If this is the case, we will let you know when it is likely to be completed.

When the tenant is unable to give us access to meet the timescale of the works needed eg an emergency repair can be changed to an urgent repair with mutual agreement between the tenant and our Service.

## Long Term Repairs

These are day to day repairs which are our responsibility but which don't fall in to the categories of emergency, urgent or appointment.

Generally these are non-urgent maintenance repairs and many of these jobs will involve renewing items, working at height or common repairs involving owners.

There can be instances where it is of benefit to carry out some repairs (particularly larger scale repairs) on a programmed basis rather than carrying out individual responsive repairs.

Some types of repairs may therefore be included in programmed repairs, for example where:

- *More than one property requires the same type of repair.*
- *The value or volume of work means that a programmed approach will be better value for money.*
- *Larger rot work repairs are needed.*

We will inspect all jobs that fall into this category before we programme the work. The length of time to complete programmed repairs will vary dependent on the volume and type of work, but generally we hope to complete these works within 60 working days.



# Common Repairs



As well as attending to emergency and routine repairs in your home, the Housing Repairs Service also carries out external repairs, for example to certain communal areas of flats such as stairs or roofs.

This service will depend on the type of property you live in. There are two basic types of property where we will carry out communal repairs: multi-storey blocks and low rise blocks.

In multi-storey blocks, generally those that have lifts, the caretaking and the Council has full responsibility for carrying out common repairs. Our normal standards and procedures for repairs apply. Owners in multi-storey blocks are recharged for their share of the costs. In some cases, such as severe weather conditions where there may be a high demand for repair work, some delays to the service may be expected.

Low-rise blocks are generally those without lifts or caretakers. Responsibility for repairs and the maintenance of common areas is shared between all owners.

Under the Tenements (Scotland) Act 2004, the Council will, if asked, help homeowners reach a decision on getting repairs to communal areas carried out according to the Tenement Management Scheme.

The Housing Repairs Service will arrange for the repair to be inspected, and then gather a range of estimates from different contractors. They will contact all homeowners and try to reach a majority decision on a contractor. All homeowners are responsible for repairs to communal areas and contributing their share of the costs. This can cause delays and you will be kept updated on progress.

In all cases of communal/block repairs where the fault is a risk to health and safety or requires repair under the Council's wind and watertight landlord commitments, the fault will be repaired according to our standards on the completion of emergency and urgent jobs. Owners can also get emergency repairs carried out for communal/block repairs.

Stair lighting is a Council responsibility. Please call **01738 476000** and select **option 1** to request a repair.





Every year, the Council repair and modernise properties where the fixtures and fittings need repair or replacement. This is carried out on a pre-programmed basis and is known as an improvement work.

If the property is due to have improvement work carried out in the next 12 months, such as a new kitchen or bathroom, repairs will only be ordered if the fault:

- *is an emergency;*
- *poses a health and safety risk;*
- *is covered by the Right to Repair;*
- *is unrelated to the planned work;*
- *will cause you serious inconvenience.*

If your property has had improvement work completed within the past 12 months, please report any repairs in the normal way by telephoning The Repairs Service on **01738 476000** and selecting **option 1** and we will work with the relevant contactor to resolve.





We aim to deliver the best service possible to all our tenants but realise that some may need a little extra help. For example:

- *Tenants aged over 75 years.*
- *People with disabilities who use a wheelchair or walking frame.*
- *Tenants with an advanced terminal illness.*
- *Tenants who use medical equipment, eg ventilators or kidney dialysis machines.*
- *Tenants within the Community Alarm Scheme.*

You or someone you live with may have a disability or medical condition which requires some repairs to be carried out more quickly or for more help to be made available. However, we can only make arrangements for this if the fault reported clearly has a negative effect on this condition.

When requesting your repair, please ensure that you clearly describe your situation to our call centre staff if:

- *you need repairs to be completed faster than normal because of your circumstances;*
- *you have an impairment that will affect the arrangements of the appointment (such as hearing impairment or mobility restriction). We can ensure that our staff are aware of this*

*and, for example, knock loudly or allow extra time for the door to be answered or make contact via a third party such as a support worker;*

- *you will have difficulty clearing the area around the fault (including lifting carpets and moving furniture) and you can't get help from relatives or neighbours;*
- *you can't carry out minor repairs that you're responsible for (see page 10), and you don't live with an able-bodied person. In some cases we may carry out these repairs but these will be rechargeable to you in advance.*

## **Please note:**

- *We will record this information in our tenant notes for future repairs only with your permission.*
- *We will arrange repairs through a third party such as a friend, relative or carer if necessary.*
- *We're unable to respond to requests for services that are not normally offered (changing light bulbs, fire alarm batteries, removing curtains for example).*





We want to get the right operative, with the correct materials to all our jobs each time, every time. To do this, it is sometimes necessary to arrange for one of our Property Inspectors to carry out a pre-inspection.

Pre-inspections may be carried out in cases where:

- *you're unable to fully explain the problem;*
- *it isn't clear who is responsible for the repair;*
- *measurements and/or technical specifications are needed before ordering work;*
- *we need to identify the source of the problem;*
- *specialist materials or equipment may be required.*

Our Repairs Centre Advisors will determine if there is a need for an inspection and in these cases make an appointment with you for a Property Inspector to call.

When the Property Inspector calls they will discuss with you what work is required.

Post-inspections will be carried out on a random sample of completed repairs, to ensure our staff and sub-contractors provide a high standard of workmanship.

We will also carry out quality checks when a tenant reports that:

- *the work carried out has not rectified the problem;*
- *the quality of workmanship was not acceptable.*

We may also carry out a quality control check if you were dissatisfied about the repair.





We will actively seek the views of our tenants using customer surveys for all normal repairs. The returned survey forms will be analysed to highlight any issues with the service and help us to make improvements.

Any specific complaints made in respect of the repair on the survey forms are looked at by the appropriate repairs staff and are fully investigated. This would normally involve a further phone call to the tenant and may result in a visit to the tenant's home to establish the full picture. Issues relating to poor customer care or workmanship are discussed during regular performance meetings with our operatives.

## **Complaints and Feedback**

We want to make sure you're satisfied with our work first time, every time. But mistakes do sometimes happen. We would encourage you to give us feedback on the service provided. We're equally committed to resolving complaints and problems as providing the best possible service first time round.

We value the feedback we receive from our customers as an opportunity to find out how we can improve our service. If, for any reason, you're not satisfied with the service we provide, our complaints process gives you the chance to state your reasons for dissatisfaction and get something done about it. We will then investigate what went wrong and, where appropriate, correct the problem and take measures to make sure it does not happen again.

## **What is a complaint?**

We define a complaint as a formal expression of unhappiness with the service we have provided.

## **What is not a complaint?**

Requests for repairs, requests to reschedule a repair appointment or requests for a higher level of service than that outlined within this policy are not complaints.





## Complaints/Compliments

### Contact the Repairs Centre

Tel **01738 476000** who will log this for you

Email **housingrepairs@pkc.gov.uk**

Write to us at:

**The Housing Repairs Service,  
Perth & Kinross Council,  
Pullar House,  
Kinnoull Street,  
PERTH  
PH2 5GD**

## Our Commitment to You

### What sort of Service can you expect?

- *We will be polite and helpful on the phone and in your home.*
- *Our operatives will be tidily dressed and wear a uniform.*
- *We will take care of your property and possessions, protecting them from damage, dust and paint.*
- *We will be polite and respectful to you and your family.*
- *We will keep noise to a minimum and warn you and neighbours of any likely disturbance.*
- *We will not work in your home without a responsible adult to allow us access to your home or hold keys to your home.*
- *We will follow Health and Safety Requirements.*
- *When we visit your home we will ensure the tradesperson shows their ID card.*
- *We will tidy up after all repair work.*
- *We will ensure that the quality of repair work is to a high standard.*
- *We will measure satisfaction levels by routinely sending our tenants and residents customer satisfaction surveys that we will use to improve the Service.*
- *We will monitor performance on a monthly basis and let you know how we perform.*





Below are some general guidelines on what you should do if you discover a fault with gas systems or appliances.

**The gas meter and stopcock are located:**

## Gas Leak/Smell of Gas

- ✗ Don't turn electric switches on or off.
- ✓ Turn off the gas supply at the meter.
- ✗ Don't smoke.
- ✓ Open doors and windows to get rid of the gas.
- ✗ Don't use naked flames.
- ✓ Call Scottish Gas Networks on the emergency freephone number **0800 111 999**.

## No gas

### Fire or explosion

Call Scottish Gas Networks immediately on **0800 111 999**

## No heating or hot water

- Check the pilot light has not gone out.*
- Check the timer is set correctly.*
- Check the isolation switch.*
- Check the gas meter has not run out of funds.*

## Pilot light has gone out

*Press the reset button on the boiler*

## Radiators are not very hot

*Check the timer is set correctly; adjust the thermostatic valves or boiler temperature setting.*

## Other

*Call the Repairs Service for advice on **01738 476000** and select **Option 1**.*

## Electricity

**Meter, fuse box and trip switches are located:**

If you have no electricity to all or part of your property the first thing you should do is check the trip switch.

## Trip switches

**No electricity (power points and lights) at all**

*The trip switch/fuse box is next to your electricity meter, if any of the switches are down push them to the up position. (The main switch may need to be turned off then on again to reset the system).*

If this does not fix the problem, you should then try the following:

*Check the Card meter*

The power will be cut off if you do not have enough credit on your card meter; you will need to get more credit to reinstate the supply.

## Are your neighbours affected?

You could also check the stair-well or communal areas.

- ✓ **Yes** Call Scottish Power on **0845 272 7999**
- ✗ **No** *It is likely that the fault originates from inside your home. Call the Repairs Service on **01738 476000** and select **Option 1** stating that you have no electricity at all. An emergency electrician will come and investigate the problem.*

## No electricity (power points or lights) to part of the property

Is it the electrical supply or the appliance?

## Electrical Supply

If lighting is affected in a part of your home, or if no appliance will work in the affected socket, call the Repairs Service on **01738 476000** and select **Option 1**, stating that you have a partial loss of electricity. They will arrange an appointment for an electrician to call.



## Appliances

If only one appliance is not working it may be faulty. If other appliances work in the same socket, you should get the appliance checked by a qualified electrician.

## Plumbing

The water stopcock is located:

### Stopcock

This is a tap that controls water flowing from the mains into your home. If you have a leak you should turn the water off at the stopcock to prevent any more water leaking.

A leak may not stop immediately because water is still flowing from the main tank or the hot water tank. You should turn on other taps to drain down the tank.

Check the immersion heater is switched off before the hot water tank is drained down. In the case of gas heating, switch off the water heater. Stopcocks are often located in the hallway or under the kitchen sink; there is sometimes more than one stopcock to allow you to turn water off to part of the property.

### Frozen pipes

If the temperature inside a property drops below freezing, water may freeze inside the pipes. When the ice thaws out it may cause pipes to burst. To prevent frozen pipes always ensure that you turn the water off at the mains, or leave central heating on if the property is going to be unattended for long periods of time during the winter months.

### No water

Check the stopcock and then check to see if your neighbours have water. If they don't - there may be a burst mains. Contact Scottish Water on **0845 600 8855** to report it.

### Taps won't turn off

Contact us and we will arrange an appointment to repair it.

If the water is running very quickly (full stream) you may need to turn the water off at the stopcock. (Sometimes there is a separate stopcock for the kitchen sink; this is usually under the sink).

You can turn the stopcock on if you need water in the meantime.

### Water discoloured

If your water is a different colour to normal, there may be a problem with the water supply. You should contact Scottish Water on **0845 600 8855** for further advice.

### Blocked toilet

As a responsible tenant you should ensure that your toilet doesn't become blocked due to objects being flushed down it. Common examples are:

- *Children's toys*
- *Nappies or baby wipes*
- *Entire toilet rolls*
- *Kitchen roll*
- *Paper*
- *Plastic toilet fresheners*

If an object causes a blockage, the cost of the repair will be recharged to you. If an object accidentally falls into the toilet bowl, you should always remove it by lifting it out; **NEVER** try to flush it away.

### Blocked shower head

It is your responsibility to clean the shower head.

### Blocked sink/bath

Using a plunger, sink unblocking agent or sodium bicarbonate can often clear blocked sinks or baths quickly and easily. Some blockages will also clear themselves if they're left for a few hours.

### Toilet won't flush

If this is your only toilet, we will respond as an emergency and make safe within 24 hours. In the meantime toilets can be flushed manually by pouring a bucket of water down it after each use.



### Water from above

If you're on the top floor, a leaking roof could be the cause. We will arrange a temporary roof repair to ensure your home is wind and water tight. Please be aware that we cannot go onto a roof in the dark, during high winds or when it is raining for health and safety reasons.

If there is another flat above you and if you would be comfortable doing so, please try speaking to the occupier and get them to turn off their water. If they're not in, check the flats on both sides and the floor above, as sometimes the leak can travel some distance before it becomes noticeable.

Where the property is privately owned, we cannot break in to repair a leak without first going through a legal process. This may take some time.

### Lost keys

If you lose your keys, door entry key, or get locked out, you will be charged for any costs associated with gaining access to your property. This includes:

- *Cost of replacing all locks.*
- *Cost of repairing any associated damage to the door.*
- *Cost of repairing any associated damage to the door frame.*

We must attend other emergency repairs before attending to anyone who is locked out. This means you could wait up to six hours before we're able to gain access to your property. To avoid this we strongly recommend that you leave a spare set of keys with family, friends or neighbours.

### Condensation/Dampness

Condensation dampness is caused by droplets of moisture in the air, often causing a mould to grow on walls. This mould growth can be inhibited and prevented by reducing the amount of moisture in your home by:

- *drying laundry outside or using a proper indoor dryer;*
- *covering pans when cooking;*
- *leaving air vents open and unblocked;*
- *using extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms every time they are in use;*
- *making sure all rooms are aired every day;*
- *opening windows as often as possible;*
- *heating all rooms sufficiently.*





**The Housing Repairs Service,  
Perth & Kinross Council,  
Pullar House,  
Kinnoull Street,  
PERTH PH2 5GD**

Tel **01738 476000**  
Email **housingrepairs@pkc.gov.uk**

**All Housing Services are now  
reached through the same number  
01738 476000**

## City Central

**Areas covered:** Bridgend, City Centre, Craigie, Errol, Friarton, Glencarse, Inchtute, Invergowrie, Leetown, Longforgan, Moncreiffe, Muirton, North Muirton, Scone, Rae Place, Stanley Crescent, Florence Place, Balhousie Street, Dunkeld Road.

Pullar House,  
35 Kinnoull Street,  
PERTH PH1 5GD

Email **CityCentralHousing@pkc.gov.uk**

## Letham and Hillyland

**Areas covered:** Letham, Hillyland, Double Dykes and Fairfield (**Council Housing only**).

Letham Area Office,  
Letham Centre,  
Tweedsmuir Road,  
PERTH PH1 2HJ

Email **LethamHousing@pkc.gov.uk**

## Auchterarder (visits by appointment only)

**Areas covered:** Aberuthven, Almondbank, Auchterarder, Blackford, Braco, Dunning, Methven, Chapelhill.

Auchterarder Area Office,  
Aytoun Hall, High Street,  
AUCHTERARDER PH3 1QD

Email **SouthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk**

## Blairgowrie

**Areas covered:** Alyth, Kirkmichael, New Alyth, Meigle, Rattray, Blairgowrie, Carsie, Murthly, Caputh, Spittalfield, Forneth, Meikleour, Stanley, Luncarty, Coupar Angus, Balbeggie, Burrelton, Kinrossie, Saucher, Collace, Guildtown, Wolfhill, Bankfoot.

Blairgowrie Area Office,  
46 Leslie Street,  
BLAIRGOWRIE PH10 6AW

**closed between** 12.30 pm - 1.30 pm, Mon - Fri  
Email **NorthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk**

## Crieff

**Areas covered:** Almondbank, Chapelhill, Comrie, Crieff, Gilmerton, Madderty, Methven, Muthill, Pitcairngreen.

Crieff Area Office, 3  
2 James Square,  
CRIEFF PH7 3EY

Email **SouthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk**

## Kinross

**Areas covered:** Aberargie, Abernethy, Blairingone, Bridge of Earn, Cleish, Crook of Devon, Forgandenny, Glenfarg, Kinnesswood, Kinross, Milnathort, Powmill, Scotlandwell.

Loch Leven Community Campus,  
Muir,  
KINROSS KY13 8FQ

Email **SouthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk**

## Pitlochry

**Areas covered:** Aberfeldy, Ballinluig, Grandtully, Blair Atholl, Dunkeld, Birnam, Kenmore, Fearnan, Acharn, Glenlyon, Kinloch Rannoch, Pitlochry, Killiecrankie, Dull, Weem.

Pitlochry Area Office,  
26 Atholl Road,  
PITLOCHRY PH16 5BX

Email **NorthAreaTeam@pkc.gov.uk**

Housing Repairs Out of Hours Emergency **01748 476000 (Option 4)**  
Customer Service Centre **01738 475000**

# Complex Repairs



It has been agreed in conjunction with our tenants that the definition of 'complex repairs' for reporting purposes is:

**Typical works that will also be considered as complex are:**

- *Asbestos removal (as a licensed contractor must be used, and specific procedures followed);*
- *Works of high value - this is set at £800;*
- *Work involving drying out periods;*
- *A course of work eg pest control over an extended period;*
- *Where there are shared responsibilities eg with former RTB properties;*
- *Insurance claims, which are dependent on the insurer's response;*
- *Ordering of bespoke manufactured items eg double-glazed windows;*





## Scottish Social Housing Charter (Indicators)

We respond to repair requests as soon as possible ensuring work is carried out effectively and efficiently.

We have clear target timescales that we need to meet. We must also check our performance and take action where necessary. Statutory Indicators are reported on annually to the Scottish Housing Regulator and compared with other local authorities to see how well we are performing.

The Indicators we need to report on are:

| Indicator Number | Description  |
|------------------|--|
| 11               | Average length of time taken to complete emergency repairs   |
| 12               | Average length of time taken to complete non-emergency repairs   |
| 13               | Percentage of reactive repairs carried out in the last year completed right first time   |
| 14               | Percentage of repairs appointments kept  |
| 15               | Percentage of properties that require a gas safety record which had a gas safety check and record completed by the anniversary date        |
| 16               | Percentage of tenants who have had repairs or maintenance carried out in last 12 months satisfied with the Repairs and Maintenance Service |

Effective performance management should have a positive effect on the operation of the Repairs Service. We share this information with our tenants and ensure we improve in areas highlighted as concerns during our routine monitoring.



## Definitions

"The Policy" is the Perth & Kinross Council Responsive Repairs Policy.

A "house" is any part of a building, being a part that is occupied as a separate dwelling and includes any garden or other structure within the grounds of the house.

Perth & Kinross Council (PKC), or any sub-contractor or outside agency carrying out a repair on behalf of PKC, are referred to as "we" or "us" throughout this policy.

A "mainstream" house refers to one that is to be permanently occupied as a Perth & Kinross Council Scottish Secure Tenancy.

An "owner" means any person who acts as landlord for either privately owned or local authority homes.

## 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;*
- *Gas Safety Regulations.*



If you or someone you know would like a copy of this document in another language or format, (on occasion only a summary of the document will be provided in translation), this can be arranged by contacting Customer Service Centre on 01738 475000.

إن احتجت أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه نسخة من هذه الوثيقة بلغة أخرى أو تصميم آخر فيمكن الحصول عليها (أو على نسخة معدلة للملخص هذه الوثيقة مترجمة بلغة أخرى) بالاتصال ب: الاسم: Customer Service Centre رقم هاتف للاتصال المباشر: 01738 475000

اگر آپ کو یا آپ کے کسی جاننے والے کو اس دستاویز کی نقل دوسری زبان یا فارمیٹ (بعض دفعہ اس دستاویز کے خلاصہ کا ترجمہ فراہم کیا جائے گا) میں درکار ہے تو اس کا بندوبست سروس ڈیولپمنٹ Customer Service Centre سے فون نمبر 01738 475000 پر رابطہ کر کے کیا جاسکتا ہے۔

如果你或你的朋友希望得到這文件的其他語言版本或形式 (某些時候，這些文件只會是概要式的翻譯)，請聯絡 Customer Service Centre 01738 475000 來替你安排。

Jeżeli chciałbyś lub ktoś chciałby uzyskać kopię owego dokumentu w innym języku niż język angielski lub w innym formacie (istnieje możliwość uzyskania streszczenia owego dokumentu w innym języku niż język angielski), Proszę kontaktować się z Customer Service Centre 01738 475000

Pejete-li si Vy, anebo n kdo, koho znáte, kopii této listiny v jiném jazyce anebo jiném formátu (v n kterých p ípadech bude p eložen pouze stru ný obsah listiny) Kontaktujte prosím Customer Service Centre 01738 475000 na vy ízení této požadavky.

Если вам или кому либо кого вы знаете необходима копия этого документа на другом языке или в другом формате, вы можете запросить сокращенную копию документа обратившись Customer Service Centre 01738 475000

Ma tha thu fhèin neo duine a dh'aithnicheas tu ag iarraidh leth-bhreacden phàipear seo ann an cànan eile neo ann an cruth eile, (aig amannan cha bhith ach gearr-chunntas a-mhàin ri fhaighinn air eadar-theangachadh) faodar seo fhaighinn le bhith a' cur fios gu: Customer Service Centre 01738 475000

You can also send us a text message on 07824 498145.

All Council Services can offer a telephone translation facility.

[www.pkc.gov.uk](http://www.pkc.gov.uk)

