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ORBIT

RESPONSIVE REPAIRS POLICY

Executive Summary	This document outlines the Responsive Repairs policy for Orbit.						
Approved by	<table> <tr> <td>Review Group</td> <td>06/12/2017</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Director of Property Services</td> <td>22/01/2018</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Customer Services SMT</td> <td>14/03/2018</td> </tr> </table>	Review Group	06/12/2017	Director of Property Services	22/01/2018	Customer Services SMT	14/03/2018
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Customer Services SMT	14/03/2018						
EA completed	Equality Analysis – completed 2017						
Explain how customers have been involved.	<p>Orbit is committed to working in partnership with it’s customers to achieve improvements in service delivery and performance through a range of involvement initiatives. We involved our customers in the creation of this policy via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • customer satisfaction surveys (real-time feedback); • repairs and maintenance ‘service improvement groups’ (SIGs) identifying areas for improvement and monitoring the delivery of action plans. • customer involvement focus groups , e.g. ‘review of the CSC scripting’ to ensure it is fit for purpose and fair to all our customers. <p>Orbit will continue to consult with customers and internal stakeholders on any revisions to this policy.</p>						
Consultation	<p>The document impacts on the following departments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responsive Repairs • Capital Delivery • Strategic Asset Management • CSC (Customer Service Centre) • Orbit Academy • Insurance • Finance <p>Orbit aims to deliver an efficient and effective business, demonstrating value for money to our customers with a high standard of service delivery provided at reasonable cost. We have a range of mechanisms in place to demonstrate and improve our service delivery, including:</p>						

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benchmarking cost and performance data; • market testing of the responsive repairs service against other housing associations and external providers; • undertaking internal business reviews
Applies to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property Services • External Contractors

SCOPE: This policy outlines the approach to the management and delivery of Orbit's Responsive Repairs service.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The policy outlines the way in which Orbit will provide a repairs and maintenance service to its customers' homes and communal areas. Orbit is committed to providing an effective service in order to ensure high levels of customer satisfaction and to protect the value of its housing stock.
- 1.2 The Responsive Repairs Policy will ensure that we:
- adhere to relevant statutory compliance obligations
 - exceed the high standards expected of us by our customers
 - continually review our work and planning in conjunction with our customers' feedback
 - carry out operational efficiency reviews to enhance service offering
 - maintain our properties so that they are in a good condition
 - safeguard the future of our properties to make full use of the housing stock
 - are cost effective, and adhere to our group standing orders
 - adhere to our Asset Management Strategy.
- 1.3 The responsive repairs policy will support the following aspects of the Orbit Customer promise:
- 1.3.1 We are easy to contact, resolve your queries and keep our promises:
- This policy commits to customers being able to raise repairs in a variety of formats. It also provides clarity on how we will prioritise repairs.
- 1.3.2 We demand the utmost professionalism from our people:
- We have a Repairs Pledge agreement with our contractors which outlines expected behaviour from their operatives and office staff. This supports our 'real time feedback' customer satisfaction surveys enabling us to learn and enhance customer experience. Feedback is regularly analysed and outcomes help to shape the pledge.
- 1.3.3 We build and maintain quality homes you can be proud of:
- This policy identifies the steps we will take to ensure that homes are maintained to a high standard.

1.3.4 We listen and take account of your views:

- We do this via Customer satisfaction feedback and quarterly Customer Service Improvement Groups. The outcomes of these help to define and influence improvements to the service we provide.

2. REGULATORY CODE AND LEGAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Orbit carries out repairs in line with legal and statutory obligations, to safeguard the health, safety and security of customers, other occupants or visitors and to safeguard the building and environment. These obligations include:

2.1.1 The Home Standard of the Regulatory framework for social housing in England (from April 2012) which requires Registered Providers:

- to provide a cost effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, customers, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time.
- to ensure that customers' homes meets the Decent Homes standard. For properties where the standards of design and quality, that applied when the home was built, are higher than those of the Decent Homes Standard Registered Providers should continue to meet these standards.

2.1.2 The [Leasehold Reform, Housing and Urban Development Act 1993](#) which requires Orbit to carry out certain repairs on behalf of tenants, in accordance with regulations set by the Secretary of State.

2.1.3 Orbit's responsibility under section 11 of the [Landlord and Tenant Act 1985](#) for maintaining the structure and exterior of our properties (including drains, gutters and external pipes) and installations in the property for the supply of water, gas and electricity; and for sanitation (including basins, sinks, baths and sanitary conveniences).

2.1.4 Orbit has a legal duty, as a landlord, under [The Gas Safety \(Installation and Use\) Regulations 1998](#) to ensure that any gas appliances and flues within our properties are safe to use and maintained correctly, including undertaking a safety check every 12 months.

2.1.5 Orbit is required to consult with leaseholders (including shared owners) prior to entering into Qualifying Long Term Agreements and prior to undertaking Qualifying works, in accordance with Section 20 of the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 as amended by the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002.

3. REPORTING REPAIRS

3.1 As part of Orbit's approach to accessible communications we provide customers with a range of ways through which to report a repair, all of which are handled at the same standard of service. Orbit currently has facilities for repairs to be reported in the following ways:

- Free phone telephone (including type talk)
- Email
- Office visit
- Face to face contact with a member of staff

- Writing
- Website

3.2 Emergency repairs can be reported by telephone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Non emergency repairs can be reported by telephone between the hours of 8am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.

4. REPAIR RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1 Orbit is responsible for repairing and maintaining buildings and any fixtures and fittings originally provided, as per individual tenancy agreements and lease agreements.

4.2 Orbit will inform customers about which repairs Orbit is responsible for and which the customer is responsible for. The responsibilities will vary to take account of customer vulnerability or the nature of the tenancy or lease and can be found in our [How to Report a Repair document](#).

Orbit is committed to a clear and transparent approach to repair responsibilities.

4.3 Central to this is providing customers with clear and consistent information. We will provide customers with details of repair responsibilities at tenancy sign up, in customer literature and in response to enquiries.

4.4 Where repairs are required as a result of damage caused by the customer or due to lack of due care and attention, consideration will be given to recovery of these costs in accordance with the Orbit's Rechargeable Repairs Policy. This applies to both current and outgoing customers.

5. REPAIR PRIORITIES

5.1 Orbit prioritises responsive repairs within the following categories:

- **Emergency repair (4 & 24 hour)** - Any repair that is required in order to sustain the immediate health, safety or security of the customer at risk, or that affects the structure of the building adversely.
- **Routine repair (within 28 calendar days)** - Any responsive repair that is not an emergency.
- **Non responsive repair** – Major repairs (non emergency) that are grouped together and included within stock investment programmes in order to deliver value for money, for example roof replacements or (non boundary) fencing replacements.

5.2 We provide a high priority response to customers that have been identified as having acute physical or mental health vulnerabilities (as defined in Orbit's Vulnerable Person Policy). This may include treating what is generally categorised as a routine repair as an emergency where the circumstances constitute a risk to the health or safety of that customer due to the nature of their vulnerability.

6. APPOINTMENTS

6.1 Appointments are offered as either morning (8am - 1pm) or afternoon (1pm - 5pm). Orbit will also send a reminder text the day before the appointment to our customers and a telephone call when the tradesman is on their way.

- 6.2 If a contractor is running late for an appointment they will contact the customer at the earliest opportunity to explain the reason for the delay and provide an updated estimated time of arrival.
- 6.3 Where a second visit is required the appointment will be made, via the contractor, before they leave the property.
- 6.4 At the end of each appointment, prior to leaving the property, the contractor will ensure that the property is safe and secure.
- 6.5 Where a customer is not home at the appointed time the contractor will issue a no access card, advising the customer of the time and date they attended. The customer will be invited to contact the Customer Service Centre to make another appointment.
- 6.6 Where a contractor is unable to attend an appointment they will contact the customer, at least two hours in advance of the prearranged appointment, to reschedule. Orbit will process repairs accurately and promptly through all stages from initial request, ordering, inspection and payment.

7. PROCUREMENT AND VALUE FOR MONEY

- 7.1 Orbit will; procure works that achieve best value for money taking into account service quality and speed of response.
- 7.2 Tender and let contracts in accordance with Group Standing Orders.
- 7.3 Make prompt insurance claims either under Buildings Insurance or Defects Warranties on all relevant repairs to ensure the response repairs budget is only spent on other repairs. This includes ensuring that employees are fully aware of which cover exists on properties and the appropriate claims procedures.
- 7.4 Ensure that only correct invoices for completed satisfactory work are authorised for payment and are passed for payment within contract timescales.
- 7.5 Ensure appropriate controls by separating repair ordering and authorisation functions and levels of authorisation responsibility, including:
- carrying out sufficient random and targeted inspections
 - gathering and analysing regular feedback about the service from customers
 - providing managers and the boards with accurate information on performance to help drive improvements
 - improving processes from evidence gathered, relevant good practice and benchmarking.

8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 8.1 Our policies are developed in line with our Equality and Diversity policy approach.

9. COMPLAINTS

- 9.1 Anyone is able to make a complaint about the service they have received and this is managed under our **Complaints Policy**.

10. PRIVACY STATEMENT

10.1 Orbit are collecting information ('personal data') so that we can manage and support our relationship with our customers, comply with legal obligations, improve our services and achieve our legitimate business aims. We are committed to complying with data protection legislation when handling customers' data. Customers have rights around their data, including the right to access their data, and to object to the way it is processed. For more information on how and why we process customers' data, and how customers can exercise their rights, please see our full Privacy Policy on our website at www.orbit.org.uk/privacy-policy/.

11. MONITORING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

11.1 This will be monitored by:

- The Head of Responsive Repairs and the Head of Property Compliance and their reporting teams
- Contract performance will be scrutinised via monthly contract meetings with our Repairs Contractors to ensure compliance with contract terms & conditions and KPI requirements are met
- A performance summary will be presented during Property Services SMT for review
- The department will also be subject to regular internal audits against this policy.

12. REVIEW

12.1 We will carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years or sooner subject to legal, regulatory changes or if internal changes require.