



# Wolverhampton Homes Open Board Meeting

9 September 2022

**Time** 10.30 am      **Public Meeting?** YES      **Type of meeting** Wolverhampton Homes  
**Venue** WV Active Aldersley, Aldersley Road, Wolverhampton, WV6 9NW

## Membership

Derek Allen  
Parveen Brigue  
Victor Browne  
Councillor Jonathan Crofts  
Angela Davies  
Hajrija Dergic  
Steve Finegan  
Councillor Asha Mattu  
Joy McLaren  
Mike Porter  
Councillor Rita Potter  
Councillor Zee Russell

## Information

If you have any queries about this meeting, please contact:

**Contact** The Business Assurance Team  
**Tel/Email** 01902 552956; [WHSBusinessAssurance@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk](mailto:WHSBusinessAssurance@wolverhamptonhomes.org.uk)  
**Address** WV Active Aldersley, Aldersley Road, Wolverhampton, WV6 9NW

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# Agenda

*Item No.*    *Title*

- 1            **Apologies**
- 2            **Declarations of interest**
- 3            **Minutes of previous Open Board meeting - 24 June 2022 (Pages 3 - 8)**
- 4            **Matters arising**

## **FOR INFORMATION**

- 5            **Revenue Forecast for 2022 - 2023 as at Quarter 1 - Jo McCoy, Head of Financial Management, City of Wolverhampton Council (Pages 9 - 14)**
- 6            **Capital Programme Delivery Update Quarter 1, 2022 - 2023 - Simon Bamfield, Head of Assets and Stock Investment (Pages 15 - 20)**

## **FOR DECISION**

- 7            **Repairs & Maintenance Policy update - Ian Gardner, Director - Property Services (Pages 21 - 44)**

# M INUTES



**Meeting:** Open Board Meeting  
**Date:** Friday 24 June 2022  
**Venue:** The Novotel, Wolverhampton  
**Time:** 09:30 am

## **MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE: -**

Angela Davies	-	Chair – Tenant Board Member
Steve Finegan	-	Vice Chair – Independent Board Member
Joy McLaren	-	Board Member – Tenant
Councillor Asha Mattu	-	Board Member – Councillor
Councillor Rita Potter	-	Board Member – Councillor
Councillor Zareena Russell	-	Board Member – Councillor
Councillor Jonathan Crofts	-	Board Member – Councillor
Hajrija Dergic	-	Board Member – Independent

## **STAFF IN ATTENDANCE: -**

Shaun Aldis	-	Chief Executive
Julie Haydon	-	Director Corporate Services
Ian Gardner	-	Director Property Services
Kevin Manning	-	Assistant Director Housing Strategy
Darren Baggs	-	Assistant Director Housing
Sarah Butcher	-	Head of Organisational Development and Staff Engagement
Jessica Whitehouse	-	Business Assurance Officer
Tim Munro	-	Head of Service Health and Safety CWC

## **OBSERVERS IN ATTENDANCE – CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL (CWC)**

Lynda Eyton	-	Client Relationship Manager, City Housing and Environment – Observer
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## **OBSERVERS IN ATTENDANCE – WOLVERHAMPTON HOMES**

Michael Hough	-	Health and Safety Manager
Melissa Oates	-	Business Assurance Officer
Naresh Bhatoe	-	Income Manager

<b>1.0</b>	<b>Apologies</b>	
1.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Angela Barnes, Director of Homes, and Communities</li> <li>- Nicky Devey, Head of Business Services</li> <li>- Derek Allen, Independent Board Member</li> <li>- Parveen Brigue, Independent Board Member</li> <li>- Mike Porter, Tenant Board Member</li> <li>- Victor Browne, Tenant Board Member</li> </ul>	
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Declaration of Interest</b>	
2.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Angela Davies, Tenant Member</li> <li>- Joy McLaren, Tenant Member</li> </ul>	
2.2	Noted with interest and allowed to remain and join in with the debate.	
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting – 18 March 2022</b>	
3.1	The minutes of the previous Open Board meeting 18 March 2022 were agreed as a true record.	
3.2	Correction to Apologies Section 1.1 - It was noted that Derek Allen was listed on the minutes from the 18 March 2022 as a Tenant Board Member, this should have read Independent Board Member.	
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Matters arising</b>	
4.1	There were no matters arising.	
<b>For Policy Approval</b>		
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Corporate Health and Safety Policy – Annual Update 2022-2023 Tim Munro, Head of Service Health and Safety, City of Wolverhampton Council</b>	
5.1	Board members were presented with an updated Wolverhampton Homes Corporate Health and Safety Policy for comment prior to presentation to the Wolverhampton Homes Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.	
5.2	The policy is updated annually and received a comprehensive update last financial year therefore only minor revisions were required this year, including amendments to the structure and job titles of members of the Senior Management Team.	
5.3	Board members queried whether the policy included details in relation to reasonable adjustments for disability, but it was advised that this policy is an overarching policy detailing management arrangements, this level of detail would be contained within the relevant HR policy that sits beneath the corporate policy.	

5.4	Board members queried how often the Health and Safety Champions meet and it was confirmed that these are chaired by the relevant Director on a quarterly basis, all meetings are minuted and subsequent actions from these meetings are presented to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.	
5.5	Board members requested that a Champion attend Board to provide an update and Board were advised that information from the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee is currently reported to Board and although observers are allowed to attend Board, options could be explored to formally invite a Champion to future meetings.	
5.6	Board member query in relation to Health and Safety champion role, with information shared on the future of the Board champion role and the collective responsibility of Board in relation to Health and Safety in particular.	
	<p><b>Action:</b> The role of Board Champions to be discussed with Board Chair and Vice Chair to confirm future arrangements.</p> <p><b>Resolved – Board Members approved the revised Health and Safety Policy 2022 - 2023.</b></p>	JH
<b>For Information</b>		
6.0	<b>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) – Strategy Update Emma Rolinson, Head of People (Presented by Julie Haydon on behalf of Emma Rolinson)</b>	
6.1	Board members were asked to note the progress outlined in relation to the EDI Strategy Action Plan.	
6.2	<p>Key updates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The SIRI pilot has been completed and was highly successful. Further work is planned to understand how this approach can be further rolled out across the company.</li> <li>- Following a review of the structure of the four sub-groups the Equality Champions have been merged into one Equality Champion Group to provide opportunities to invest in different campaigns to provide an opportunity for more staff to be involved. This aims to encourage a sense of belonging for both staff and customers.</li> <li>- Further work is underway to review and redesign the EDI Strategy in conjunction with the CWC EDI team, equality groups, staff, and customers.</li> <li>- Launch of the EDI pledge for managers, to include development of a video promoting SMT and SLT commitments.</li> <li>- Development of the Customer Contact Strategy to drive better engagement with customers and staff.</li> </ul>	


<p>6.3</p> <p>6.4</p> <p>6.5</p> <p>6.5.1</p>	<p>A Board member queried whether this strategy is impacting on staff awareness and in turn improving performance. It was confirmed that having a wider group will enable Wolverhampton Homes to spread work more evenly. It was acknowledged that there is still more work required to ensure equality, diversity and inclusion are part of day-to-day work and to encourage staff to engage. The mentoring programme also supports reverse mentoring opportunities. One of the observers present today has been part of this scheme and confirmed that it is a very open and honest process and gives staff confidence to talk about things affecting all parties.</p> <p>Board queried participation in the mentoring scheme and whether this was helping with career advancement. It was confirmed that it does help and has a growing number of participants. All management trainees will be assigned to a mentor matching with them with like-minded people and more experienced, mature members of staff.</p> <p>Board acknowledged that this is a positive strategy and an area of strength for Wolverhampton Homes.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Board development to include EDI terminology.</p> <p><b>Resolved – Board members noted the update, key highlights and progress made in relation to the equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) Strategy action plan.</b></p>	<p>SB</p>
<p>7.0</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p>	<p><b>Learning and Organisational Development Update</b>  <b>Sarah Butcher, Head of Organisational Development and Employee Engagement</b></p> <p>Board Members were asked to note the content of the report which provided a progress update for the year 2021-2022 on people development, training and employability opportunities provided for employees and customers as part of the Organisational Development strategy 2020-2023 and the Early Careers and Talent strategy 2021-2023.</p> <p>The content of the report was outlined as below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Two Employment Coaches continue to support people who are some way away from being ready for the job market. Targets were exceeded for the year.</li> <li>- Click Start Team aimed at supporting participations tackle digital and financial barriers in relation to gaining employment. Targets were achieved.</li> <li>- My Learning Hub - the bespoke learning management system (LMS) has continued to develop extending the digital learning offer. Login activity has increased steadily.</li> <li>- 10 e-learning modules were launched covering statutory and mandatory modules, some of which were designed in house</li> </ul>	

	<p>resulting in significant cost savings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- WH will shortly be launching the pre-starters site enabling new starters to complete statutory training prior to their start date.</li> <li>- Face to face training (either virtually or in person) has increased beyond pre-pandemic levels including successful delivery of the Asbestos Task and Finish Project.</li> <li>- WH delivered 4,161.8 hours of continuous professional development, an increase of 181% on the previous year.</li> <li>- All managers are in the process of completing an Institute of Leadership and Management programme in relation to leadership skills.</li> <li>- A number of Corporate Services staff have completed Business Partner development to Level 5.</li> <li>- Following successful recruitment process – six management trainees have been appointed.</li> <li>- WH have and continue to support the 18 – 24 Youth Employment programme.</li> <li>- The three office apprentices recruited in September 2019 have all successfully completed their apprenticeship.</li> <li>- 12 trade apprentices were recruited in March and September 2021.</li> </ul>	
7.3	<p>Board acknowledged that excellent work is being done in relation to Learning and Organisation Development. In relation to the Click-Start project it was confirmed that the ESF funding runs until March 2023, WH will be delivering to the end of this calendar year, allowing a three-month period at the end to close the project. It was acknowledged that there is some remarkable work being done and the Leader of the Council is incredibly happy with the work and WH contribution to the 18-24 project. Board agreed that the support being provided to the 18-24 group can be life changing.</p>	
7.4	<p>Board asked about fast track degrees, and it was confirmed that of the 22 attendees at the recruitment event, some were already qualified and although not suitable for the vacancies are being considered for existing vacant positions in Property Services. WH also met with DWP who are anticipating a cohort of graduates who may be registering for JSA or UC and WH have asked them to identify potential candidates who may be able to fill existing vacancies.</p> <p><b>Resolved – Board members noted the content of the report.</b></p>	
8.0	<p><b>Revenue Outturn Position 2021-2023</b>  <b>Jo McCoy, Head of Financial Management, City of Wolverhampton Council</b></p>	
8.1	<p>This report was presented by Julie Haydon.</p>	
8.2	<p>Board was presented with the Revenue outturn position for 2021-2022 and the outturn position on commercial trading activities.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The outturn position has resulted in a net supporting contribution of £30,000 from reserves.</li> <li>- There is an overspend against the budget of £857,000, including £200,000 investment in IT and a “one off” cost increase of £100,000 for fencing.</li> <li>- Commercial trading activities have contributed £270,000 income net of costs.</li> </ul>	
8.3	There is continued pressure on repairs and voids due to both increasing operating costs and service demand as per section 2.8 of the report.	
8.4	WH have negotiated an adjustment down to 6% and although some of the common building components have now stabilised WH are seeing big pressures on the capital programme, now offset by the increased fuel costs and costs of external specialist contractors.	
8.5	Board acknowledged the performance at year end.	
8.6	WH will continue to be mindful of how they deliver services and align plans and strategies to make the city a better place. Consideration of the relationship between the revenue and capital budgets is key as if the capital budget is reduced this impacts on the revenue.  <b>Resolved – Board noted the content of the report.</b>	
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Any other business</b>	
9.1	No items raised.	
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>	
10.1	Friday 09 September June 2022 – 09:30hrs Venue – WV Active, Aldersley	



# Board Report

	<b>Agenda Item 5</b>
	<b>09 September 2022</b> <b>Revenue Forecast for 2022 - 2023 as at Quarter 1</b>
	<b>Open Report</b>
<b>Status:</b>	For Information
<b>Author and job title:</b>	Jo McCoy - Head of Financial Management, City of Wolverhampton Council
<b>Contact No:</b>	01902 554415
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Board members are asked to note the Revenue outturn forecast for 2022-2023 as at Quarter 1</b>
<b>Key risks and contentious issues:</b>	<p>The council have approved a core Management Fee for 2022 - 2023 of £40,460,000 for the delivery of landlord services and Homelessness services. This incorporates the allocation for the homes where management transferred from the former Springfield Horseshoe TMO.</p> <p>The original budget for 2022-2023 was balanced with a planned / forecast contribution from reserves of £1.0 million.</p> <p>The Quarter 1 forecast is currently for an overspend against the budget of around £546,000.</p> <p>This forecast now provides for a proposed pay award of around £1.6 million which is £1.0 million higher than the original budget provision for the pay award, thus contributing to the majority of the £546,000 overspend pressure.</p>

	<p>In addition, there may be significant risks in the budget position from both inflation and demand for services, and as it is early in the year the position is likely to change.</p> <p>Given the current economic climate there is a necessity more than ever for WH to have a more detailed understanding of the company's finances and VfM efficiencies it need to make in particular vacant posts which currently equate to £0.5 million that, if filled, would increase the pressures on the net budget position. This supports the necessity for new ways of working to be implemented across the business.</p> <p>This is balanced with the impact of rising energy and fuel costs, the pressures on the cost of living, increased complexity of customer demands and the rise in homelessness.</p>
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## Management Summary

### 1.0 Purpose

1.1 This report is to inform the Board of the Quarter 1 revenue outturn forecast position for 2022 – 2023 as at 30 June 2022.

### 2.0 Revenue Forecast 2022-2023

2.1 The budget was set for 2022 - 2023, with a forecast £1 million contribution from reserves to meet increased demand and cost pressures on the repairs budget.

2.2 The forecast budget position at 30 June 2022 is for a forecast £546,000 overspend against budget. The position is summarised below in Table 1.

**Table 1 – Summary Forecast Outturn for 2022-2023 at Quarter 1 (including forecast pay award)**

	<b>2022-2023 Budget £000</b>	<b>2022-2023 Forecast £000</b>	<b>2022-2023 Variance £000</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Employees	28,550	29,031	481
Non-Pay Costs	23,550	23,941	391
Total Expenditure	52,100	52,972	872
<b>Income</b>			
Management Fee (core plus ASB)	(40,682)	(40,682)	-
Trading Income	(6,884)	(7,007)	(123)
Other Income	(3,534)	(3,737)	(203)
Total Income	(51,100)	(51,426)	(326)
<b>Net Budget position</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>(1,546)</b>	<b>546</b>

2.3 The employee budget is forecast to overspend by around £481,000. This includes a £1.0 million increase to pay award assumptions. The original budget assumed a pay award of 2% (£0.6 million) but this assumption has been increased to a forecast of £1.6 million based on the offer from the Local Government employers. Subject to union agreement this will would see a lump sum increase of £1,925 to all SCP points.

2.4 It is noted that there are currently vacant posts in the establishment to the value of around £500,000 more than ever, recruitment to any vacant role is reviewed to ensure that the role is required, and to establish whether any efficiencies can be made through the digital agenda.

2.5 WH are holding back inflationary pressures, despite this expenditure on repairs and maintenance is forecast to be higher than budget by £179,000, due to inflation on servicing and maintenance contracts. Repairs and Maintenance budgets were increased by £1.4 million to reflect demand and cost pressures, and response repairs and voids costs, making up the majority of the budget are forecast to outturn around budget.

- 2.6 However, there are many risks around the assumptions behind the forecasts, for example if prices rise more than expected and if the energy crisis has a further impact on the issues being experienced such as with damp and mould. The position will be closely monitored.
- 2.7 It is planned that financial assistance payments will increase to around £400,000 this year, compared to a budget of £100,000. This will be paid for from grant funding passed over from the council from government grants.
- 2.8 Overall, income is largely on target, with the Asbestos team expected to generate an additional £100,000 and other additional grant income expected.
- 2.9 Further detail on the income and expenditure forecast for 2022-23 can be seen at Appendix 1.

### **3.0 Budget Strategy for next financial year 2023 - 2024**

- 3.1 The medium-term financial position has become even more challenging over recent months, due to economic uncertainties and inflationary cost pressures; CPI for June 2022 increased to 9.4%. Such unprecedented price increases will also lead to likely increases in pay costs. The original budget allowed for a 2% pay increase for 2022-2023, however the forecast now assumes £1.6 million to cover this with further increases expected next year.
- 3.2 The proposed budget for 2022-2023 also included a one off contribution of £1.0 million from reserves. Due to the continued price increases, it is unlikely that the company could sustain reducing repairs and maintenance budgets by £1.0 million. This would also impact on the ability to address the pressures of damp and mould and Section 11 claims.
- 3.3 Wolverhampton Homes is working closely with the council to model increases to both revenue management and maintenance costs and the cost of capital works and assess the ability to provide services within the current management fee and the short and long term impact on the Housing Revenue Account.
- 3.4 To help mitigate, Wolverhampton Homes is set to present a request to the council's Financial Issues Group to propose an increase in resources to our Management Fee on the basis of high inflation and increased costs relating to repairs and maintenance.

### **4.0 Summary of Financial Position**

- 4.1 The position at Quarter 1 is of an overall overspend against the budget for 2022-2023 of £546,000. This is due to the impact of unprecedented inflation and the need to allow for a higher pay award than that allowed for in the budget.
- 4.2 The forecast overspend for the year and the budgeted £1.0 million contribution from reserves, along with the detailed overspend would decrease the total reserves to around

£3.8 million at 31 March 2023. This leaves funding available for one off investment as the company looks to decrease costs overall in line with the Medium Term Financial Strategy. Without more resources or a reduction of services the positive financial position would not be sustainable longer term – this will be partially mitigated with the company's Our Future plans to work in new ways and deliver more for less.

4.3 Income from the management of the nineteen WH owned properties continues to perform to predicted expectations.

## **5.0 Financial and value for money implications**

5.1 Wolverhampton Homes has a long-term record of effective budgetary control.

## **6.0 Legal and regulatory implications**

6.1 There are no legal implications of the contents of this report.

## **7.0 Human Resources implications**

7.1 There are no proposals within this report with Human Resource implications.

## **8.0 Health and safety implications**

8.1 There are no proposals within this report with health and safety implications.

## **9.0 Equalities implications**

9.1 Has an equality impact assessment been carried out? **No.**

9.2 Explanation: There are no proposals within this report.

## **10.0 Impact on the environment and community**

10.1 The report does not contain any proposals that affect the environment or the community.

## **11.0 Long term consequences for the company**

11.1 Tight control of budgets and getting the best use of our cash reserves is essential to ensure we have sufficient resources in the long term.

## **12.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers and others**

12.1 Careful financial planning is required to ensure we can continue to provide the same level of service for customers and support local suppliers.

## **13.0 Impact on the Wolverhampton Homes' Management System**

13.1 Will any new policy or policy updates have an impact on the management system? **No**

## 14.0 Appendices


### 14.1 Appendix 1 - Income and Expenditure Forecast 2022 - 2023 as at Quarter 1

#### Appendix 1

#### Income and Expenditure Forecast 2022 - 2023 as at Quarter 1

	2022-23 Budget £000	2022-23 Forecast £000	2022-23 Variance £000	Comment
<b>Expenditure</b>				
Employees	28,550	29,031	481	Increased provision to pay award
Repairs and Maintenance	15,996	16,175	179	Inflationary increase to servicing contracts
PSL payments to landlords	210	196	(14)	Strategy to reduce number of leases
Facilities	853	780	(73)	Reduced office running costs
Transport	1,074	1,041	(33)	
Supplies and Services	3,711	4,081	370	Financial assistance grant payments, asset fire survey fees
Support Services	1,706	1,668	(38)	
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>52,100</b>	<b>52,972</b>	<b>872</b>	
<b>Income</b>				
Management Fee	(40,682)	(40,682)	-	
Trading Income	(6,884)	(7,007)	(123)	Asbestos income generation
Capitalised salaries	(2,217)	(2,217)	-	
PSL rental income	(260)	(240)	20	Strategy to reduce number of leases
Investment Property Income	(150)	(153)	(3)	
Other Income	(907)	(1,127)	(220)	Financial assistance grant income
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>(51,100)</b>	<b>(51,426)</b>	<b>(326)</b>	
<b>Budget surplus</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>1,546</b>	<b>546</b>	

# Board Report

	<b>Agenda Item 6</b>
	<p><b>09 September 2022</b>  <b>Capital Programme Delivery Update</b>  <b>Quarter-1, 2022 - 2023</b></p>
	<b>Open Report</b>
<b>Status:</b>	For Information
<b>Author and job title:</b>	Simon Bamfield, Head of Assets and Stock Investment
<b>Contact No:</b>	07717 732984
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<p><b>Board Members are asked to note the following in relation to the delivery of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital Programme:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>performance achieved</b></li> <li>• <b>financial position</b></li> </ul>
<b>Key risks and contentious issues:</b>	<p>Despite best endeavours, the delivery of the HRA Capital Programme continues to be adversely affected by the following factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supply and cost of construction materials</li> <li>• ability to recruit and retain construction personnel</li> <li>• need for increased design work, so buildings meet current and proposed legal standards (to ensure they will meet the requirements of the Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Bill)</li> </ul>

## **Management Summary**

### **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 This report is to confirm to Board members the progress attained with the delivery of the Capital programme.
- 1.2 The level of expenditure achieved during the first quarter of the financial year 2022 – 2023 will be presented to Board on 09 September 2022.

### **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Capital programme for the financial year 2022 - 2023 was approved by the City of Wolverhampton Council's Cabinet on 19 January 2022. The Council delegated £46.41m to Wolverhampton Homes to manage and deliver. In addition, there were also some projects delivered by Wolverhampton Homes on behalf of Council budget holders (disabled adaptations, infill new build etc.); the value of this work was £9.63m, bringing the total to £56.04m.
- 2.2 The HRA Capital budgets are subject to on-going refinement, through quarterly reviews that are endorsed by the Council's Cabinet Resources Panel. This is to ensure that the necessary funds are allocated to the relevant budgets and that any public borrowing to support the Capital programme is only obtained when appropriate.
- 2.3 The current position against the Quarter 1 budgets (with adjustments for any slippages or overspends from the previous financial year), showing the expenditure against and variance to each approved budget will be presented to Board on 09 September 2022.

### **3.0 Financial and value for money implications**

- 3.1 Due to the significant pressures affecting the delivery of the capital programme, the expenditure report for the first quarter of 2022 - 2023 is still being prepared and will be presented at the Board meeting.
- 3.2 These pressures include:
  - Global shortages of key building materials, due to interruptions in the production of products and raw materials, initially because of Covid-19 shutdowns but more recently due to the war in Ukraine and the embargo on products from Russia.
  - Increases in the demand for materials and labour due to the large number of high-profile projects within the region, such as HS2, the extension of the West Midlands Metro, the £500m Birmingham Airport redevelopment and the significant regeneration within Birmingham (such as the £1.9bn Smithfield development).
  - Shortages of technical and professional personnel that are required to meet the higher competency requirements of the Fire Safety Act and Building Safety Act. Trades shortages are also profound, with the net impact resulting in a surge in market forces, driving up labour costs and creating even greater difficulty to attract people to public sector contracts.



### 3.3 The key delivery issues to note:

- a. There continues to be a number of high-cost voids, with 68 properties completed by the end of June (this is 50% higher than the historic norm). The extent of work that needs to be undertaken can be significant due to age-related deterioration and the condition the properties / gardens are left in, which means the average void cost is circa £16,500 a property.
- b. The refurbishment of the tower-blocks at Heath Town is underway. The scaffolding to Brockfield House has been erected and work has started in the communal areas of the block, with work in customers' homes starting later in the year. The enabling work and scaffold erection has started at Champion House.
- c. The Infrastructure programme, which includes fire safety improvements to the tower-blocks across the city and the replacement of the mechanical and electrical services, is progressing. The fourth phase of the programme at the Merry Hill estate is underway and the replacement cold water mains have now been commissioned. Work to the communal areas is now progressing well and work within customers' homes will commence in Quarter 2.
- d. The fifth phase of the programme at the Graiseley estate has commenced, with external work starting in January 2022 and completion of this element is scheduled for Quarter 2. Further consultation will be carried out with customers in the coming months to advise them of the work that will be carried out in their homes that will start during Quarter 3.
- e. Delivery of the phase one flat entrance fire door replacement programme, to the medium-rise and low-rise blocks of flats continues successfully, with a further 610 doors installed during Quarter 1, bringing the total to 1,520 new fire doors installed to date.
- f. The internal improvements programme continues to deliver small numbers of Decent Homes refurbishments, following referrals from the Repairs, Compliance or Housing Management teams. By the end of Quarter 1, a further 25 properties had been refurbished. It is planned to increase the size of this programme during the year with the Strategic Construction Partners, Wates and United Living delivering this work.
- g. The roof replacement programme continues to be delivered to a high standard, with work completed at Warstones Gardens and Castlebridge Gardens during Quarter 1, and the completion of the works at Jericho House expected by the end of September 2022. The 2022 - 2023 city-wide re-roofing programme is underway and being delivered in accordance with the programme.
- h. Work is progressing at the single persons housing accommodation scheme at Bond House. Additional concrete repairs were identified to the ceilings throughout the building, which has caused a delay to the original programme date, with the completion now planned for February 2023.

#### **4.0 Legal and regulatory implications**

4.1 Wolverhampton Homes are required to meet the requirements of the Consumer Standards, Charter for Social Housing Residents, The Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, and the Building Safety Act 2022.

#### **5.0 Human resources implications**

5.1 There are currently vacancies within the teams that deliver the Capital programme, which is impacting on performance. Current vacancies include Asset Condition Surveyors, Quantity Surveyors and Property Supervisors.

5.2 Numerous recruitment campaigns have yielded little success and WH are continuing to consider more targeted advertising or use of consultants, where appropriate. Regular dialogue continues with the University of Wolverhampton to attract their local students.

5.3 The challenging situation is likely to be exacerbated with projected pay rises not keeping up with inflation. This may see the gap between WH salaries, and the marketplace widen.

#### **6.0 Health and safety implications**

6.1 Site health and safety of these complex construction projects is robustly managed through daily site inspections and formal meetings with our partners.

6.2 Performance is also monitored via WH's Health and Safety forums and the Health and Safety team. Latent building safety risks continue to be managed via our wider compliance and site inspection programmes.

#### **7.0 Equalities implications**

7.1 Has an equality impact assessment been carried out? **Not applicable.**

7.2 Explanation: Where equality impact assessments are required, these are prepared during the pre-construction phase of each individual project.

#### **8.0 Impact on the environment and community**

8.1 The Capital programme continues to provide a significant positive impact on the environment and the local communities through the employment of local people, with circa 38% of the people employed living within Wolverhampton, and by providing safe, efficient, and comfortable homes for our customers.

#### **9.0 Long term consequences for the company**

9.1 The Capital programme is focused on ensuring the long-term sustainability of the housing stock portfolio, through timely interventions. These range to the replacement of worn-out components, for example central heating boilers, through to major schemes that enhance the quality of the built assets and surrounding environment.

9.2 Failure to deliver the Capital programme effectively will result in insufficient numbers of improvements being undertaken, leading to an increased pressure on the repairs service and a rise in disrepair claims.

9.3 Despite the problems currently being encountered, the capital programme continues to be delivered efficiently, provides value for money, and focuses on the key priorities of improving building safety and maintaining the Decent Homes Standard.

#### **10.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers, and others**

10.1 Having a strong capital programme and the ability to deliver against promises helps strengthen the business relationships with the Strategic Construction Partners, their sub-contractors and key suppliers.

10.2 The approach taken through the pandemic, to provide a nurturing environment for these companies, safeguarding the wellbeing of their employees and maintaining employment wherever possible, has further strengthened these business relationships.

10.3 There is regular engagement with customers through the design-phase of each new Capital project, so WH can ensure that customer views and concerns are understood and addressed prior to work starting.

10.4 Further engagement with customers is undertaken prior to work commencing and throughout this process, to ensure the appropriate support is provided.

#### **11.0 Impact of Covid-19**


11.1 The delivery of the HRA Capital programme has faced significant challenges due to the impact of Covid-19, but effective control measures are in place.

#### **12.0 Impact on Wolverhampton Homes' Management System**

12.1 Will any new policy or policy updates have an impact on the management system? **No**

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# Board Report

	<b>Agenda Item 7</b>
	<p><b>09 September 2022</b>  <b>Repairs &amp; Maintenance Policy update</b></p>
	<b>Open Report</b>
<b>Status:</b>	For Decision
<b>Author and job title:</b>	Ian Gardner, Director - Property Services
<b>Contact No:</b>	07971 021420
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>Board Members are asked to approve the Repairs &amp; Maintenance Policy</b>
<b>Key risks and contentious issues:</b>	<p><u>Key risks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The company has a range of statutory duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and a wide range of legislation related to the maintenance of the housing assets under its control, as defined within the Management Agreement with the City of Wolverhampton Council.</li> <li>• The company manages a range of assets, that if not adequately maintained, inspected, tested or serviced, may cause injury, death or disease to customers, colleagues or the public.</li> <li>• The company may be vicariously liable for the omissions or failures leading to injury, death or disease of an employee or contractor engaged or managed by Wolverhampton Homes.</li> </ul>

	<p><u>Contentious Issues</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Some colleagues may require additional training to meet the requirements of the emerging Building Safety legislation</li><li>• Some customer expectations may not be met where they require shorter repair timescales that can be achieved</li></ul>
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## Management Summary

### 1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This policy sets out Wolverhampton Homes' approach to repairing and maintaining the assets, under its management control, to ensure they remain safe and serviceable for its tenants and communities.

### 2.0 Background

- 2.1 In response to emerging Building Safety legislation and guidance, the company is reviewing its suite of '*Building Safety Strategy*' related policies. This updated policy is one of five core policies and linking to the Strategic Assessment Management plan.
- 2.2 In response to the Consumer Standards Review undertaken by Savills, on behalf of the Council in early 2021, a formal customer consultation exercise was undertaken on the draft revised policy during April 2022 (see Appendix 1).
- 2.3 The policy has also been reviewed in consultation with service managers and has been benchmarked with similar sized housing organisations, to ensure it meets the foreseeable needs of the business and the City of Wolverhampton Council.
- 2.4 The final proposed policy balances customers' priorities, within available repairs and maintenance budgets, and ensures compliance with relevant regulatory standards.
- 2.5 The proposed policy (see Appendix 2) includes a number of updates, summarised below:
  - a. Links with the Regulatory Framework
  - b. Definitions of 'Responsive Repairs' and associated service standards based on risk, including timescales for inspections or surveys
  - c. Methods of reporting repair requests
  - d. Clarifications of Tenants Responsibilities, in accordance with their Tenancy Agreement
  - e. Specialist surveys required for Tenants Own Improvements may be chargeable in some circumstances
  - f. Testing of smoke and carbon monoxide alarms
  - g. Application of 'winter' response times for loss of heating and/ or hot water throughout the year
  - h. Commitment to address any Category 1 hazards where properties are pending major investment works or improvements
  - i. Confirmation that Programmed Repairs may be postponed where a Right To Buy Application is being processed
  - j. Enhanced service standards associated with reports of damp, condensation or mould
  - k. Commitment to use data to inform asset investment decisions or targeted intervention
  - l. Updated Empty Homes (Voids) Standard

### **3.0 Financial and value for money implications**

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of this policy.
- 3.2 The policy does set out a number of mandatory requirements relating to minimum competencies, accreditations, quality assurance arrangements and contract monitoring. These arrangements are expected to be met from existing resources.
- 3.3 Implications relating to the introduction of maintaining 'The Golden Thread of Information' under new legislation is currently being evaluated and will vary by each contract or project.
- 3.4 Existing procurement arrangements will ensure value for money is maintained. Evaluation methodologies will consider qualitative & financial appraisals and tenderers proposals regarding Social Value.

### **4.0 Legal and regulatory implications**

- 4.1 This policy contributes to the company fulfilling its legal obligations under the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and a wide range legislation related to the maintenance of the housing assets under its control.
- 4.2 The policy also supports the company's compliance with a wide range of legislation, related to the maintenance of the housing assets under its control, as set out in Appendix C of the policy.

### **5.0 Human resources implications**

- 5.1 There are no direct human resources implications arising from the introduction of this policy.
- 5.2 Some colleagues may require additional training to meet the requirements of the emerging Building Safety legislation. Any significant changes to job roles, will require job descriptions to be reviewed under existing People Deal arrangements.

### **6.0 Health and safety implications**

- 6.1 The policy underpins Wolverhampton Homes commitment to the health, safety and wellbeing of its customers.
- 6.2 It is the company's aim to exceed, where possible, the minimum health and safety legislation and adopt best practice.

### **7.0 Equalities implications**

- 7.1 An Equalities Assessment has been completed and was peer reviewed and approved by the ECF on the 26 August 2022.



- 7.2 No adverse effects towards any Equality Groups were identified and no corrective actions were recommended.
- 7.3 The group did recommend the company considers Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training for call handling staff and repairs teams to ensure 'vulnerabilities' were identified and appropriately risk assessed to ensure correct prioritisation. This forms part of a wider action plan currently under development with the Learning and Development team.

## **8.0 Impact on the environment and community**

- 8.1 No significant environmental or community impacts are anticipated by implementing this policy.

## **9.0 Long term consequences for the company**

- 9.1 Implementing this policy will balance customers' priorities, within available repairs and maintenance budgets, and ensures compliance with relevant regulatory standards.

## **10.0 Impact on business relationships with suppliers, customers and others**

- 10.1 No significant impacts on external stakeholders are anticipated by implementing this revised policy.
- 10.2 The policy will be regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to meet the needs of its customers, with opportunities to enhance service standards being considered where reasonably practicable and within available budgets.
- 10.3 The company will provide feedback on the customer consultation exercise when the revised policy is implemented.

## **11.0 Impact of Covid-19**

- 11.1 There is no impact of Covid-19 on the application of this policy.

## **12.0 Impact on Wolverhampton Homes' Management System**

- 12.1 Once approved, the policy will be available to all colleagues via the document management site.
- 12.2 If approved by Board members, the updated document(s) will be available on the management system by:  
Date: 30 September 2022  
Officer responsible: Ian Gardner

## **13.0 List of Appendices**

- 13.1 Appendix 1 - Repairs & Maintenance Policy 2022 - 2025

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# Repairs & Maintenance Policy

2022 - 2025



Name: Shaun Mulloy	Name: Ian Gardner	Name:		
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### Document History

Version	Summary of changes	Document Status	Date
V1.0	Draft for consultation	Archived	Feb 2022
V2.0	Post Customer Consultation	Live	July 2022

## **Contents Page**

- 1.0** Background
- 2.0** Statement of Intent
- 3.0** Scope
- 4.0** Requesting Repairs
- 5.0** Landlord and Tenant responsibilities
- 6.0** Prioritising Repairs and Inspections
- 7.0** Completion at First Visit and Right First Time commitments
- 8.0** Decorations
- 9.0** Right to Repair
- 10.0** Service Standards
- 11.0** Voids (Empty Homes)
- 12.0** Interdependences and related policies
- 13.0** Monitoring
- 14.0** Equality Analysis
- 15.0** Appendix A - Right to Repair (statutory timescales)
- 16.0** Appendix B - Empty Homes (Void) Standard
- 17.0** Appendix C - Statutory Instruments relating to this policy

## 1.0 Background

This policy sets out Wolverhampton Homes' approach to Repairs and Maintenance and how the company will fulfil its responsibilities and duties to ensure the homes and assets, under its management control, remain safe and serviceable for its residents, communities and colleagues.

This policy forms part of a suite of documents that underpin the company's Building Safety Strategy, as below;



The scope of this policy includes all areas of repairs and maintenance to existing assets and components, that are the responsibility of Wolverhampton Homes to maintain.

The Strategic Assessment Management Plan and the City of Wolverhampton Council's investment programmes set out investment priorities where key components have reached the end of the expected lifecycle and/or are beyond uneconomical repair. In addition, separate programmes or policies may exist where homes or estates require major improvements, upgrading or demolition.

## 2.0 Statement of Intent

Wolverhampton Homes considers health and safety as paramount and takes its responsibilities seriously. This policy outlines the company's responsibilities and legal obligations prescribed within the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, and associated specific & themed regulations and guidance documents, with the aim of eliminating risks where reasonably practicable and managing any residual risks to all affected persons.

This policy demonstrates the company's commitment to ensure compliance with all legal, regulatory and statutory requirements associated with the repairs and maintenance with all homes, communal areas and assets managed by Wolverhampton Homes.

Wolverhampton Homes will endeavour to carry out effective repairs at the time agreed with the tenant in a safe and effective manner.

All colleagues and contractors working within the field of repairs and maintenance will be competent to effectively manage and deliver each area of activity within the scope of this policy.

### 3.0 Scope

This policy sets out how property repairs and maintenance related service requests, submitted by tenants, colleagues, or partners, will be managed to meet statutory & regulatory standards. The policy balances the efficient delivery and maintains value for money to meet the needs of the tenant(s) and ensure homes are appropriately maintained, remain safe, secure and functional.

The main aims of the policy are to:

- Meet minimum housing standards and regulatory requirements, particularly the Home Standard of the Regulatory Framework
- Ensure compliance with statutory instruments for housing including, Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 2018, Housing Act 2004, etc.
- Maintain properties to the Decent Homes Standard
- Meet contractual requirements set out in the Tenancy Agreement or Lease.
- Deliver a cost effective and customer focused service
- Undertake as many repairs as possible as planned or packaged work to deliver improved value for money
- Allocate requests for repairs to a category based on information provided by the tenant, but at the final discretion of Wolverhampton Homes

The Regulator of Social Housing defines 'Consumer Standards'. Its role is to intervene where failure to meet the standards has caused, or could have caused, serious harm to tenants. This policy sets out how Wolverhampton Homes will ensure compliance with the relevant Consumer Standards.

#### **Responsive Repairs Definition**

Responsive Repairs are defined as service requests made by the tenant to existing elements/components of the property.

Responsive Repairs are not part of:

- Planned cyclic maintenance, e.g. lift maintenance, electrical testing, gas servicing or cyclical painting.
- Planned work, e.g. external painting, guttering or fencing repairs
- Planned and programmed work, e.g. plastering, guttering, extensive roof repairs, paving and fencing repairs etc.,
- Planned improvements, e.g. new kitchens, bathrooms, rewiring, heating upgrades
- Void Refurbishments (work to empty homes).
- Aids or Adaptation works to support occupants continuing to live in their homes

### 4.0 Requesting Repairs

Tenants will be offered a range of ways to make requests for repairs including:

- Via telephone, calls received outside normal office hours will process emergency service requests only.
- Via self-serve on Wolverhampton Homes Website
- Via webchat via Wolverhampton Homes Website
- Via e-mail
- In writing to Wolverhampton Homes head office

Tenants will be encouraged to use digital channels to make service requests for repairs, but a range of communication methods will be available to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

## 5.0 Landlord and Tenant Responsibilities

The Landlord and the tenant have different responsibilities in relation to repairs. It will be made clear to the tenant at the time they request a repair whose responsibility it is. Responsibility will be determined in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement. Where a repair is the tenant(s) responsibility, wherever possible, the tenant will be signposted to another organisation that could help, which would be at the tenant's own expense. Alternatively, Wolverhampton Homes will undertake the work and charge the tenant in accordance with the Chargeable Works Policy.

Landlord responsibilities include the structure and elements of the exterior, and components that have been installed by the landlord.

Tenants are responsible for keeping the interior of their homes in good order and well decorated. Tenant responsibilities include items they have installed themselves and minor repairs, for example changing light bulbs, unblocking sinks and replacing WC seats.

Tenants are responsible for maintaining the gardens, including trees, (except in circumstances outlined in the Tenancy Agreement), shrubs, garden paths (not providing access to the home), patios and clearing rubbish.

The Landlord will maintain paving from the highway to each main access door (front and rear, where applicable) to the property.

The Landlord will maintain fencing that;

- backs onto open land
- is next to a main 'A' road
- borders an alleyway, canal or railway embankment
- backs onto a garage site or car park
- surrounds communal areas to all flats in a building
- subject to a service charge

Requests for general property improvements, e.g. installing additional electric sockets and repairing damage to a property caused by the occupants will normally be considered as tenant responsibility.



Tenants who wish to make alterations or improvements to their home will normally be required to seek permission from Wolverhampton Homes in advance. Any specialist surveys or inspections that may be required to facilitate a tenant own improvement, may be chargeable.

Permissions may be granted subject to conditions or declined. Unauthorised alterations or improvements may be removed or rectified by Wolverhampton Homes and any costs incurred will be recoverable from the tenant(s).

Where the fault is not an emergency and has occurred as a result of tenant damage, neglect or abuse the tenant(s) will be required to pay the cost of repair before any work is undertaken.

Tenants are responsible for reporting any repairs, defects, damp or damage to Wolverhampton Homes as soon as possible.

Tenants are responsible for undertaking regular testing of smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors within their home and report any faults to the landlord. The landlord will provide guidance and instruction how to test alarms within their home.

More details regarding landlord and tenant responsibilities are contained within the Tenancy Agreement.

## **6.0 Prioritising Repairs and Inspections**

Requests for repairs that are the landlord's responsibility will be prioritised as follows:

### **6.1 Emergency Repairs**

Emergency repairs are attended to within 24 hours, but most service requests will receive a same day response and will be prioritised based on risk, i.e. the impact of the repair on the occupant's vulnerability. A repair is classed as being an 'emergency' if it is likely to cause an immediate health and safety risk to the occupants, neighbours or the public or if serious damage to the property is likely.

Emergency repairs include, but are not limited to;

- Blocked flues to an open fire or boiler
- Blocked or leaking foul drains or soil stacks
- Burst pipes or water leaks that cannot be contained or controlled
- Carbon Monoxide alarm activations
- Exposed electrical wires, connections, fixtures or fittings
- Faulty smoke alarms, detectors, or safety devices
- Gas leaks
- Insecure windows, doors or locks
- Toilets not flushing, where no other working toilet is available
- Total loss of electricity – excluding network or metering issues not in under Wolverhampton Homes control

- Total loss of heating or hot water

If it is not possible to complete the repair, we will make the situation safe before leaving the property and will return to complete the repair at an agreed later date.

## 6.2 Routine Repairs

Routine Repairs are day to day repairs that are not urgent and do not present an immediate health & safety issue for the occupants.

Routine repairs include, but are not limited to;

- Cracked glass or misted double glazed units
- Faulty doors and windows (that are secure)
- Faulty electrical fittings and appliances, that do not pose a hazard
- Faulty internal joinery and stairs
- Faulty kitchen units
- Minor leaks to sanitary ware, water or waste systems
- Plaster patches
- Repairs to existing fencing and gates
- Replacing parts after gas servicing, where not the primary heat source

We aim to complete all routine repairs within 20 working days with a pre-agreed appointment. These will normally be started and completed the same working day. However, on occasions additional visits may be required.

## 6.3 Programmed Repairs

These are larger projects that normally require replacement of existing major components.

Programmed repairs include, but are not limited to;

- Any works that that require asbestos removal
- Plastering walls and/or ceilings
- Renewing electrical appliances
- Renewing fence panels and/or gates
- Renewing floors
- Renewing gas appliances
- Renewing stair treads and/or balustrades
- Replacing bath or sinks
- Replacing kitchen units or worktop

We aim to complete programmed repairs within 90 calendar days from the initial service request or property inspection.

Some service requests may result in major work or wholesale replacements, or upgrades being undertaken in a future Council work programme and not as a programmed repair. Timescales will vary depending on approved budgets. The

property, however, will be maintained in accordance with minimum habitation standards and any Category 1 hazards remedied until the improvements take place.

Wolverhampton Homes will communicate with the affected residents to keep them informed of future planned works and timescales determined by the City of Wolverhampton Council's investment programmes.

Where tenants have submitted a Right To Buy Application, Programmed Repairs may be postponed where the works will impact on the property's valuation.

#### **6.4 Inspections**

Wolverhampton Homes aim is to allocate all service requests for repairs based on the information provided by the tenant at the first point of contact. Most repairs will receive an initial visit from a trades person or contractor.

Based on the nature of the service request an inspection by a competent surveyor may be necessary to obtain more information or to undertake a more detailed investigation or determine the scope of the work.

When an inspection is required, an appointment will be offered within 20 working days (excluding for reports of damp, condensation and/or mould).

Non-emergency repairs works orders or instructions for work will not be raised until the inspection has taken place. Any resulting repairs will be raised for the appropriate timescales or programmed into future planned or batched works.

#### **6.5 Reports of Damp, condensation and/or Mould**

Homes can experience dampness and/or condensation for a range of reasons, including building defects (e.g. leaking pipes or roofs), poor construction design, (e.g. concrete construction or low levels of insulation), inadequate heating and/or ventilation or high internal humidity levels. These scenarios can create environments that exacerbate condensation forming and mould spores to grow.

Wolverhampton Homes will adopt a '*fabric first approach*' and initially assume reports of dampness, water penetration and/or mould growth relate to a property related cause.

Where tenants report dampness, water penetration and/or mould growth, where this is not considered requiring an emergency response, i.e. burst pipes, an inspection by a competent person will be undertaken within 10 working days.

Any remedial works will be completed within 20 working days. The competent person may also provide the tenant with advice to minimise the effects of condensation, where appropriate.

Condensation on or within glazing units will be processed as a Routine Repair.

Where the property is subject to future planned improvements, energy efficiency upgrades or demolition, all reasonable measures will be employed to ensure the home continues to be a safe and healthy environment for the tenant(s).

The vulnerability of the occupants will be carefully considered when determining the response to reports of damp, condensation and/or mould growth, i.e. the extent and location of the mould growth etc.

Wolverhampton Homes will be proactive and take reasonable steps to prevent atmospheres occurring that encourage mould growth through its use of materials & specifications and by analysing property data and patterns of service requests. Colleagues and contractors will also be encouraged to look for signs of dampness, water penetration and/or mould growth when undertaking home visits, for any reason, and report these to the company for action.

We will use data from contacts, service requests, repairs activity, complaints and stock condition information to inform future planned investment programmes.

Where homes are identified for future major investment or disposal, Wolverhampton Homes will closely liaise with the tenant(s) to ensure their home remains habitable and we will continue to undertake essential repairs and maintenance, based on the individual needs of the occupants. Temporary repairs may be undertaken prior to the major improvements or rehousing of the tenant(s) occurring, where appropriate.

We will use appropriately trained colleagues to record and investigate reports of dampness, water penetration and/or mould growth, schedule remedial works or provide appropriate advice to tenant(s). Wolverhampton Homes will also utilise external independent specialists to investigate or arbitrate where appropriate.

Wolverhampton Homes will regularly communicate with tenants to raise awareness of the effects and causes of dampness, water penetration and/or mould growth and provide advice & guidance reduce occurrences. The company will also support tenant(s) by providing specialist advice or connecting them to appropriate support networks.

## **6.6. Appointments**

Individually agreed appointment timeslots will be made with tenants for all routine and major repairs and inspections where access inside or to the rear of the home is required. For communal area responsive repairs and external works, where no controlled access is required, appointments will not normally be made.

We will endeavour to keep all appointments made or give the tenant prior notice if this is not possible and a new appointment will be agreed. Appointments will normally be offered for Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) for AM, PM, all day or all-day avoiding school run slots.

Where appointments need to change for operational reasons, Wolverhampton Homes we will provide as much notice as reasonably possible. Similarly, if tenants

need to change an appointment we request as much notice as possible to enable new appointments to be made for other customers. If a pre-arranged appointment is missed due to tenant unavailability or refusal to allow access, the repair call order will be closed, and the tenant will need to contact Wolverhampton Homes for the repair to be rebooked. Rebooked repairs will be treated as a new repair for calculating repairs timescales.

## **7.0 Completion at First Visit and Right First Time Commitments**

Wolverhampton Homes is committed to providing Value for Money services and maximising tenant satisfaction. We are committed to providing a repairs service that completes as many repairs at the first visit to the tenant's home, wherever possible, and completed works are 'right first time' i.e. the repair undertaken is of satisfactory quality and free from defects.

Some repairs cannot be completed in one visit for technical reasons or where specialist materials may be required. Where possible, we will advise the tenant in advance if more than one visit will be necessary, and we will keep the tenant informed of progress.

To manage the quality of repairs, inspections, audits or surveys may be undertaken. Tenants can also report concerns or defects to us for investigation.

## **8.0 Decoration**

Internal decoration is normally the tenant's responsibility. Care will be taken to minimise damage to any decoration resulting from repairs work. Where decorations have been substantially affected, Wolverhampton Homes will offer a range of remedies, including;

- Decoration vouchers for the tenant to purchase materials for their application
- Decoration works to be undertaken by Wolverhampton Homes or their appointed contactor

## **9.0 Right to Repair**

Wolverhampton Homes will meet its legal requirements under the Right to Repair. The relevant statutory timescales are set out in Appendix A.

## **10.0 Service Standards**

Wolverhampton Homes aims to;

- Attend Emergency repairs within 24 Hours
- Complete Routine/non-urgent day-to-day minor repairs within 20 working days of report or inspection
- Complete Major/Planned Repair within 90 calendar days after inspection
- Where these timescales cannot be met, the customer will be informed with reasons for the delay and estimated timescales

## **11.0 Voids (Empty Homes)**

All new homes (excluding Mutual Exchanges) will be;

- Free from mould
- Meet minimum statutory repair standards
- Reasonably clean
- Safe (no Category 1 hazards present)
- Secure (lockable external doors and latchable windows)

## **12.0 Interdependences and related policies**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following company documents and statutory instruments (see Appendix C).

- The Asbestos Policy
- Asbestos Management Plan
- Fire Safety Policy
- Control of Contractors Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Strategic Asset Management Plan
- Health and Safety Policy
- Complaints Policy

## **13.0 Monitoring**

Exception reporting will be presented to the management team, Audit and Business Assurance Committee and/or Board as required.

Performance against the service standards defined within this policy will be reported to tenants via Wolverhampton Homes Annual Report.

This policy will be regularly reviewed, at intervals no greater than three years and adapted accordingly to respond to future legislative or regulatory changes.

## **14.0 Equality Analysis**

This policy sets out how the company will comply with existing housing repairs related legislation, regulatory standards and best practice.

The policy applies equally to all tenants' homes and communal areas, regardless of the resident's age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, and sexual orientation.

Due consideration will be given to tenants who require different forms of communication, and we will take account of individual needs and preferences to ensure all tenants have access to our services.

An Equality Analysis was reviewed by the Equalities Forum on 26 August 2022 and the policy approved.

## Appendix A

### Right to Repair (statutory timescales)

Qualifying repairs and timescales are set out in the table below.

Repairs type	Prescribed period (in working days)
Total loss of electric power	1
Partial loss of electric power	3
Unsafe power or lighting socket, or electrical fitting	1
Total loss of water supply	1
Partial loss of water supply	3
Total or partial loss of gas supply	1
Blocked flue to open fire or boiler	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 31 <sup>st</sup> October and 1 <sup>st</sup> May	1
Total or partial loss of space or water heating between 30 <sup>th</sup> April and 1 <sup>st</sup> November	3
Blocked or leaking foul drain, soil stack, or (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling-house) toilet pan	1
Toilet not flushing (where there is no other working toilet in the dwelling-house)	1
Blocked sink, bath or basin	3
Tap which cannot be turned	3
Leaking from water or heating pipe, tank or cistern	1
Leaking roof	7
Insecure external window, door or lock	1
Loose or detached banister or handrail	3
Rotten timber flooring or stair tread	3
Door Entryphone not working	7
Mechanical extractor fan in internal kitchen or bathroom not working	7

Extract from; <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/1994/133/made>



## Appendix B

### Empty Homes (Void) Standard

All new homes (excluding Mutual Exchanges) will meet the following minimum standards upon possession or within agreed timescales with the incoming tenant(s).

The property will be clean.

We will:

- treat any areas of mould growth
- clean and disinfect sinks, toilets, baths and wash basins
- sweep and clean all floors
- clear away any rubbish, including that in gardens, outbuildings and communal areas (during periods of inclement weather this may be undertaken after the tenant has taken moved in)
- remove any sheds or outbuildings that are unsafe or in very poor condition

The property will be safe.

We will:

- complete gas (where applicable) and electrical safety checks and provide a copy of the safety certificates
- repair or replace missing or unsafe flooring and floor treads on stairs
- repair or replace missing or damaged handrails
- remove polystyrene ceiling tiles
- replace missing or damaged glazing (some cracked glass or misted double glazed units may be undertaken after the tenant has taken moved in)
- check for asbestos and take action to remove it or manage its presence in accordance with current regulations
- remove alterations or fixtures and fittings that we think pose a health and safety risk
- offer options of keeping any alterations if they can be made safe, provided the tenants assumes any ongoing maintenance liability
- remove garden ponds, unless there is an environmental need to keep them, or the incoming tenant specifically requests they remain
- ensure there are no visible signs of infestation and undertake treatment where appropriate
- ensure there is satisfactory paving from the public highway to external doors
- ensure existing patios or paths to gardens are free from trip hazards or are removed

The property will be secure.

We will:

- change main entrance door locks (wherever possible) and provide at least two keys for all locks, including lockable windows
- ensure at least one smoke alarm is equipped on each storey of their homes where there is a room used as living accommodation

- ensure a carbon monoxide alarm is equipped in any room used as living accommodation which contains a fixed combustion appliance (excluding gas cookers).
- make sure any rear gates are safe and securable with a bolt
- replace missing existing fencing that forms a boundary between the property and open land, such as railway lines or canals. Unsafe fencing or gates between homes may be removed and will normally be replaced as part of our future planned fencing programme (service charges may apply)

The property will be in a reasonable state of repair.

We will:

- ensure doors and windows open and close correctly
- ensure kitchen and bathroom fittings are usable and fit for purpose
- maintain washable floor coverings in kitchens and bathrooms, if already provided
- ensure that there is either a gas or electrical cooker supply
- supply washer connections for washing machines, where reasonably practicable
- ensure all plumbing is working properly
- ensure gullies and drain grids are clean and free from obstruction
- explain how to operate the heating system, upon occupation
- ensure visible plaster work is in a reasonable condition and can accept decoration, (i.e. wallpaper)
- ensure that the property is wind and weather tight
- ensure any gardens are provided in a manageable condition, i.e. overgrown gardens are reduced & cleared to enable maintenance with normal domestic garden tools/equipment (during periods of inclement weather this may be undertaken after the tenant has taken moved in)

## **Appendix C**

### **Statutory Instruments relating to this policy;**

- Building Act 1984
- Building Regulations 2010
- Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2015
- Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012
- Defective Premises Act 1972
- Environmental Protection Act 1990
- Fire Safety Act 2021
- Gas Safety (Installation and Use) Regulations 1998
- Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
- Homes (Fitness for Human Habitation) Act 201
- Housing Act 2004 – Housing Health & Safety Ratings System
- Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment regulations 1998
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999
- Occupiers Liability Act 1984
- Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005
- The Electricity at Work Act 1989
- The Landlord & Tenant Act 1985
- The Secure Tenants of Local Housing Authorities (Right to Repair) Regulations 1994
- The Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (Amendment) Regulations 2022

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